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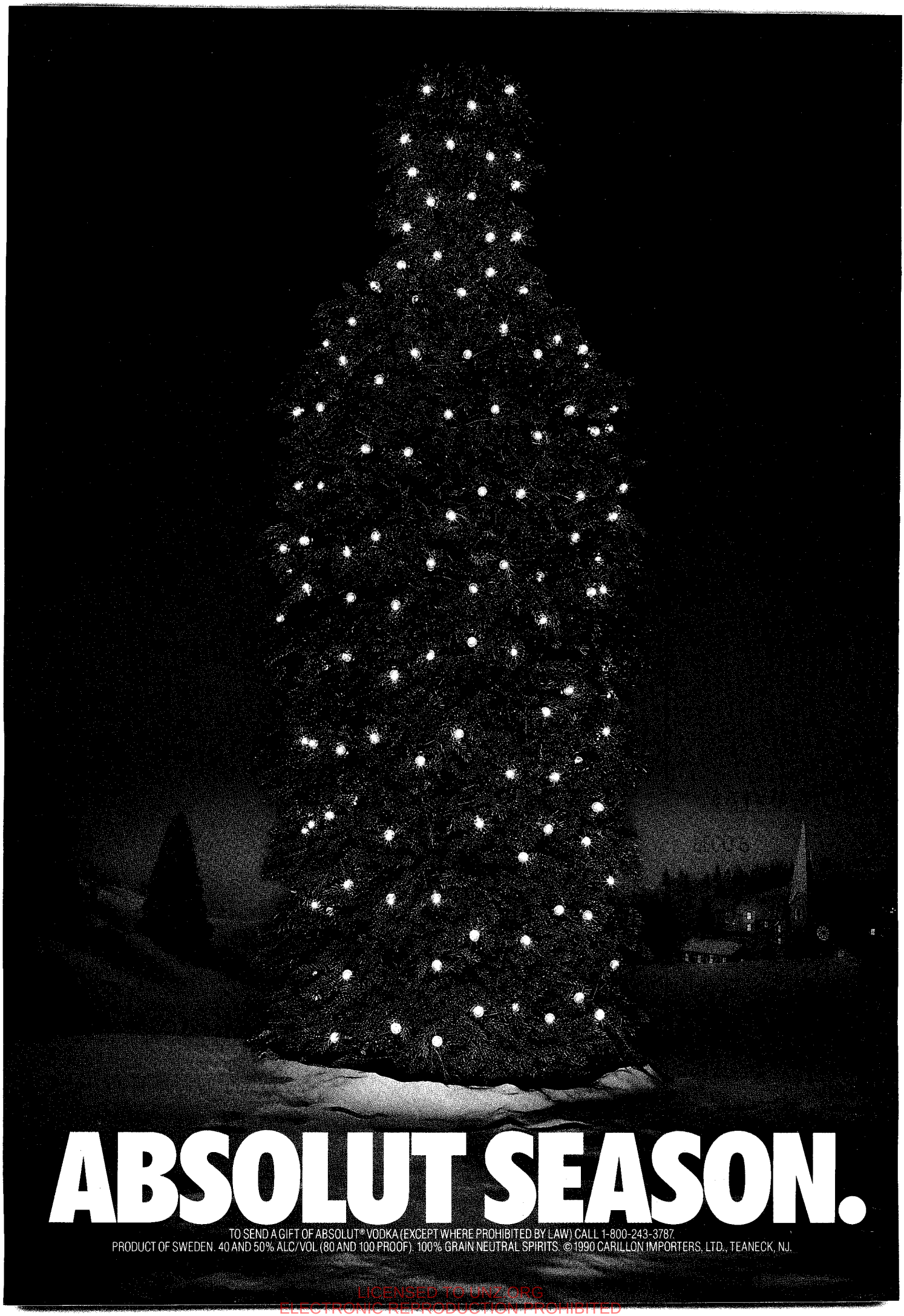

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NATIONAL REVIEW

DECEMBER 17, 1990 VOL. XLII, NO. 24

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The French Revolution was barely under way when Burke warned of the practical brutality inherent in its noble-sounding theory. The bitter heritage of Communism—Jacobinism refined—confirms his wisdom. Will we ever learn? **Conor Cruise O'Brien** looks at a prophet unheeded in his time and ours.

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LETTERS

To Die For

Like Joe Sobran, I am puzzled by the vigor of the United States' reaction to Iraq's conquest of Kuwait ["Why NATIONAL REVIEW Is Wrong," Oct. 15].

There is every reason to believe that if Iraq had been completely successful in taking Kuwait, or had even taken the Arabian peninsula as well, oil prices would have gone up. However, the notion that Saddam Hussein would strangle the world's economy is exceedingly bizarre: nobody with something to sell prices it out of reach of his customers. As high as the market will bear, surely, but not out of reach. Saddam Hussein is a world-class creep, but he is not that dumb.

Of all the industrialized countries in the world, the U.S. is the only one (with the possible exception of the UK) with considerable oil reserves. In the context of world economic competition, we're risking war to protect the economic interests of Germany and Japan. If the price of oil were to stay where it is now, Germany and Japan would suffer far more than the United States.

King Fahd seems to be playing double or nothing. Apparently Saudi Arabia is going to do its best to make up the shortfall of lost Iraqi and Kuwaiti oil production. Since it cannot make all of it up, prices will remain higher than they were before the crisis. If you multiply the price of a barrel of oil by Saudi production unfettered by OPEC production limits, you get a very tidy figure. So, unless he loses his throne (or, of course, his life), King Fahd will make an astonishing profit.

Bernard T. Higonnet
Cambridge, Mass.

The Faithful Are Wary

From "On the Record" [Nov. 19]: "GRAND SLAM: Bill Buckley's *Gratitude* got front-page treatment in Sunday (October 28) book sections of big three: *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Los Angeles Times*."

Little wonder that Mr. Conservative receives top billing in the citadels of the liberal establishment when he promotes one of their longtime pet schemes. "I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance" (Luke 15:7).

Milton Friedman
Senior Research Fellow
Hoover Institution
Stanford, Calif.

The Rest of the Story

Steven W. Mosher's "The West and Comrade Chou" [Nov. 19] explains that "What the West received by way of 'news' from China was the product of consensus rather than competition." And that "China dispatches, although each was signed by a single correspondent, represented a collective vision of the war." It is too bad that Mr. Mosher picked only this snapshot in history, one example of what could have been a broader point: that the precedents of media conduct set in the 1930s have carried forward up to the present day.

We have witnessed many instances of this kind of reporting in recent years. Correspondents in Nicaragua were renowned for taking the Sandinistas' accounts of the Sandinista–Contra war as the literal truth.

The correspondents that Mosher describes are not the only ones preening themselves on a job well done. I could submit a list of several others to add to the "Hankow gang": Walter Duranty, for one, whose self-congratulations were echoed with a Pulitzer Prize. And then, of course, there's Dan Rather.

Jody Brennan
New York, N.Y.

Selling Private Property

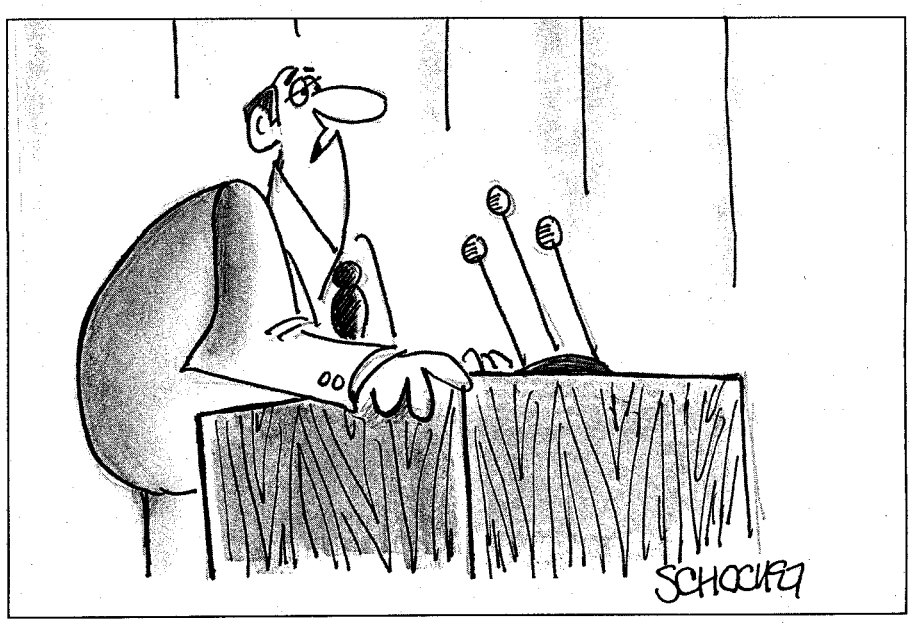
Milton Friedman's "Private Property" was, as usual, right to the point ["Is the Market Moral?" Nov. 5]. He nicely sets the stage with two historic quotations, and proceeds to make clear why Friedrich A. Hayek was right and Pierre Joseph Proudhon was not.

The two quotations also reveal why those persuaded by Hayek and Friedman have such a difficult time persuading others. Note that Proudhon's utterance used just three words while Hayek's consumed 27, a factor of nine.

Proudhon and his philosophical descendants understood the tremendous power of rhetoric: "Property is theft." Could we not counter with our own encapsulation: "Anti-property is slavery"?

Are we being simplistic when we boil it all down to private property? I don't think so. If the importance of private property is not insisted on it tends to be ignored. Compare Professor Friedman's focus on the wellspring role of private property with the points of his two associates, Henry Hyde and William Simon, who don't mention it. Mikhail Gorbachev et al. understand (at least intuitively) the meaning of "Anti-property is slavery." That is why they choke every time they feel the urge to face the need for privatization.

It is not enough to say that "The free



". . . and in the event of nuclear attack, alternate-side-of-the-street parking would be suspended."

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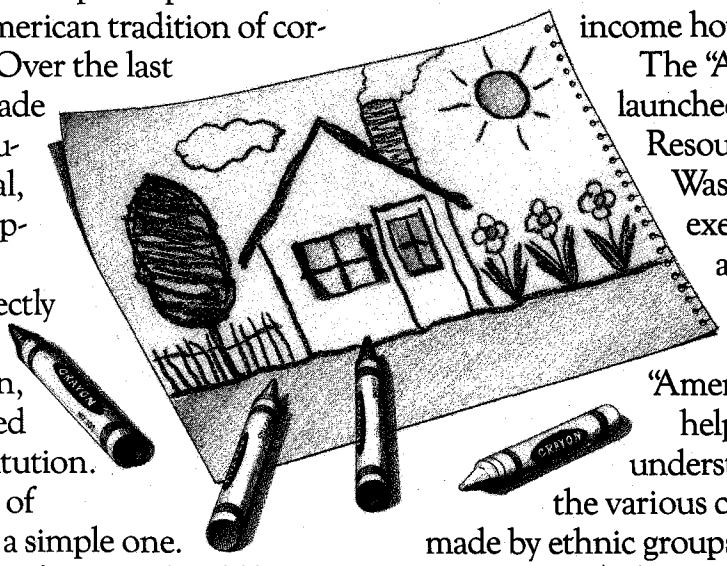

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market has triumphed." We must understand that the condition precedent to free markets is private property. Further, unless we grasp all of the vast implications of the concept of private property we will be in constant danger of reversion to Anti-property systems of human governance.

John G. B. Howland
Glenview, Ill.

Light, Action, Cameras

According to Tom Bethell, Einstein's special theory of relativity "proposed a) that the speed of light is the same in all directions, irrespective of the motion of any apparatus set up to measure it; and b) that observers traveling with different velocities would see the same things with different lengths and durations" ["A Challenge to Einstein," Nov. 5].

It would have been more accurate to say "and b) the laws of physics hold for all inertial frames of reference." This was Galileo's idea. Einstein combined it with his proposition of the invariant velocity of light—itself a rather absolute proposition. Mr. Bethell tries to make it sound as if Einstein was already "bending" space and time. But that had to wait for the general theory.

But let's assume the speed of light actually does vary a tiny quantum bit. So what? Einstein merely assumed invariance for aesthetic reasons, to get rid of the ether, a dinosaur dating back to the days of Aristotle's anthropomorphic universe. Einstein was using Occam's razor. Pick the least complicated explanation, and dump the needless speculation. He was right. There is no ether.

Nevertheless, to return to the days of complicated machinery, Mr. Bethell embraces Beckmann's outdated "field" concept, in which gravity once again becomes a mysterious force, pulling at things. We are told that this is simplicity. Who does he think he's kidding? What is the force that constitutes gravity? Where did it come from? What is the field made of?

Consider, in contrast, the poetic beauty of Einstein's four-dimensional spacetime. Because space, which is nothing more than the potential for motion, is bent by the presence of a mass, gravity no longer has to be explained by a mysterious force, about which Newton himself was afraid to speculate (*"Hypotheses non fingo"*). It is rather the natural path of motion near the presence of mass in space. This is far simpler than unseen forces pulling and tugging with unseen hands.

Mr. Bethell comments about Mercury, but why doesn't he mention something a little bigger, like the Crab nebula pulsar, whose very existence was predicted by Einstein's elegant tensor equations, extrapolated by J. Robert Oppenheimer, and confirmed in 1967?

Time dilation and the effects of gravity have already been established *over and over again* according to Einstein's theory, pinpointed to a much greater degree than Newton's laws would have suggested. Atomic clocks carried in airplanes miles above the earth have proved the disparities in time with their counterparts ticking away on the surface. Further, the reality of white dwarf stars and neutron stars testifies to the beauty and extensive sweep of this theory. The ramifications of Einstein's brilliance are not yet fully appreciated. (I've said nothing about $E = mc^2$.)

Finally, Mr. Bethell admits that *only the preliminary results* confirm Beckmann in his quixotic attempt to drag us back to the alleged salad days of absolute space and time. The same could have been said about Velikovsky's silly thesis and Weber's attempt to detect gravitational waves. The clincher will be when several disinterested researchers come up with the same results.

Mr. Bethell is barking up the wrong tree. If he really wants something to worry about, he should bone up on quantum theory and the ramifications of Copenhagen.

John Farrell
Boston, Mass.

Ideology Ignored

I am more than a little perplexed and turned off by NATIONAL REVIEW's ever-increasing indulgence in Bush-bashing. The November 19 issue had, at rough count, no fewer than 12 items which cast sarcasm, criticism, scorn, or condemnation at the President.

I quite understand that *NR* stands foursquare for a conservative program, as do I. Yet it is a simple fact that you cannot win on every point. President Bush is not an ideologue, and not everything he has done deserves the enthusiastic support of conservatives. Yet on the whole he has done well, and for my money he is a better President than Ronald Reagan. He is generally on the conservative end of the spectrum.

It seems to me that you are helping pave the way for the election of a Democrat to the White House in 1992. And whatever else the Democratic candidate is going to be, he is not going to be conservative. So why the Bush-bashing? It doesn't make sense.

Perry Laukhuff
Amherst, Va.

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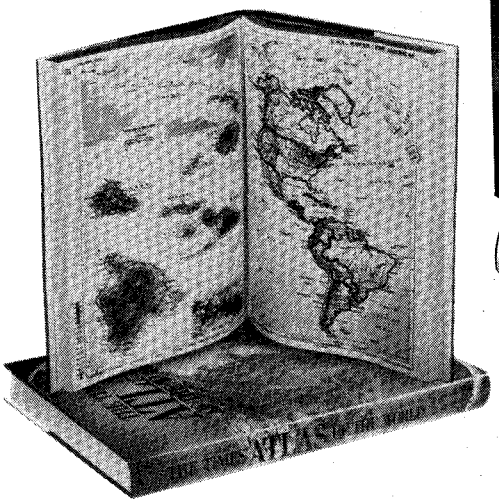

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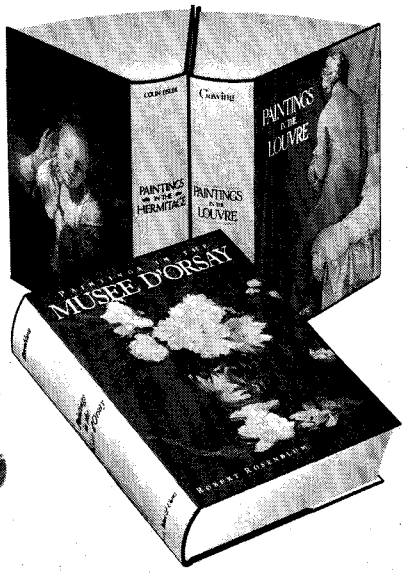

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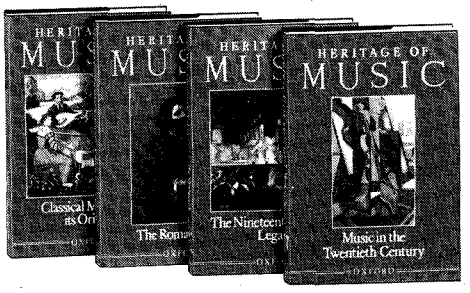

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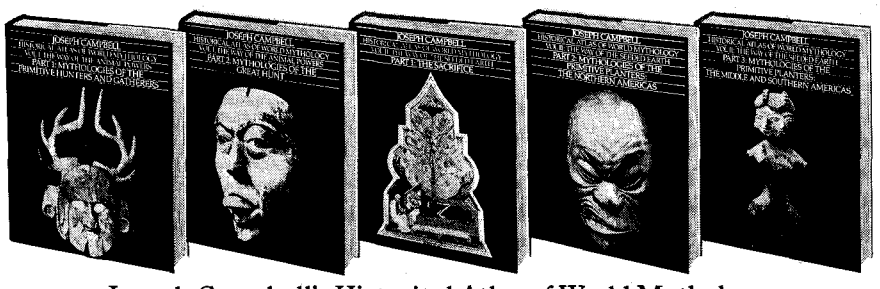

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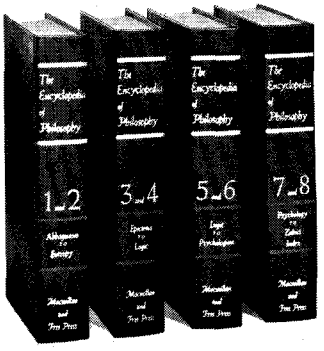

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FROM THE EDITOR

Goodbye to All That?

■ The imperatives of our printing schedule, much aggravated by the Thanksgiving holiday, compel me to write about the Tory leadership election when all that is known is that there will be a second ballot. Whether Mrs. Thatcher has won, lost, or even stood is something you, the reader, know more about than I do. This places me in something of a difficulty.

One point, however, I *can* make. The grounds on which Mrs. Thatcher's Tory enemies have attacked are ignoble, even squalid. They make almost no mention of principle or policy. Such differences of principle as are known to exist—for instance, Mr. Heseltine's leanings toward European federalism—have been briskly downplayed. He now firmly disavows the label of federalist and claims to favor a modest European "cooperation."

Almost the only justification advanced by the Heseltine camp is that its man has a better chance of winning a general election, as evidenced by a clutch of public-opinion polls. Aside from the triviality of such a claim, merely ask if a strong position in an opinion poll could ever be a sensible test for an office which of its very nature involves occasional and sometimes prolonged unpopularity.

Of course, no political leader can or should ignore rooted and substantial public sentiment. But the test of that cannot be the weathervane of public-opinion polling. It must be whether a party leader attracts new and substantial blocs of support over a period of time. President Reagan won and kept the loyalty of the so-called "Reagan Democrats." In Britain Mrs. Thatcher won over a similar group of former Labor voters—skilled workers who after 11 years of Thatcherism are now home-owners, shareholders, and investors with a stake in the future.

They are less likely to keep voting Tory if Mrs. Thatcher and the principles of popular capitalism associated with her are thrown aside. Some may, indeed, vote Labor out of resentment. Yet their continued loyalty would be a much more solid and abiding electoral advantage than an opinion poll's fleeting popularity estimated on a thousand doorsteps in a single afternoon.

If that is to be the test, the Tories might as well elect the milkman to be their leader. And for all I know, by the time you read this, maybe they will have done.

■ When I said some of this on CNN's *Crossfire*, co-host Michael Kinsley accused me of being "in love" with Mrs. Thatcher. Well, actually, I wouldn't dare. But if Mrs. Thatcher has indeed followed President Reagan into private life, I would have the sad feeling of having lived through and past the Heroic Age of Conservatism.

This feeling was first prompted by the circumstances in which Mrs. Thatcher received the disappointing result of the first ballot. It was at the Paris conference which formalized the end of the cold war and where the Hungarian prime minister announced the imminent dissolution of the Warsaw Pact, which had been gaining ground in 1979.

One was reminded of Churchill's return from the Potsdam victory conference to find that he had lost the 1945 election and of his famous sentence in *The Gathering Storm*: "On the night of the tenth of May [1940], at the outset of this mighty battle, I acquired the chief power in the State, which henceforth I wielded in ever-growing measure for five years and three months of world war, at the end of which time, all our enemies having surrendered unconditionally or being about to do so, I was immediately dismissed by the British electorate from all further conduct of their affairs."

Admittedly, neither Churchill nor Mrs. Thatcher managed solo. The U.S. was the arsenal of democracy in both cases. But they showed pioneering leadership when the West was hesitant. Is that now over?

I hope not. —JOHN O'SULLIVAN

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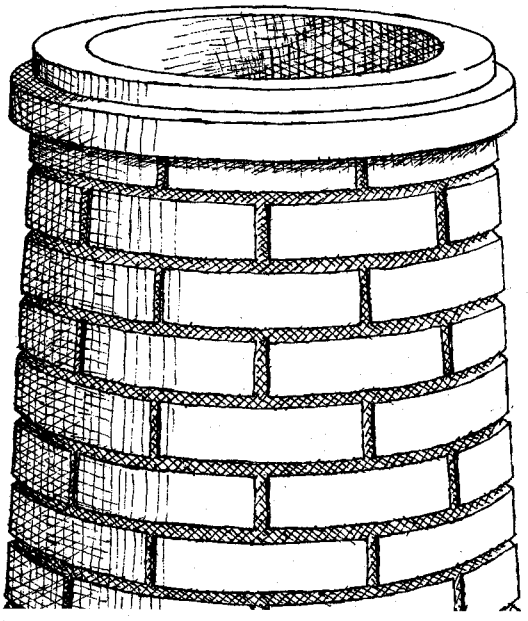

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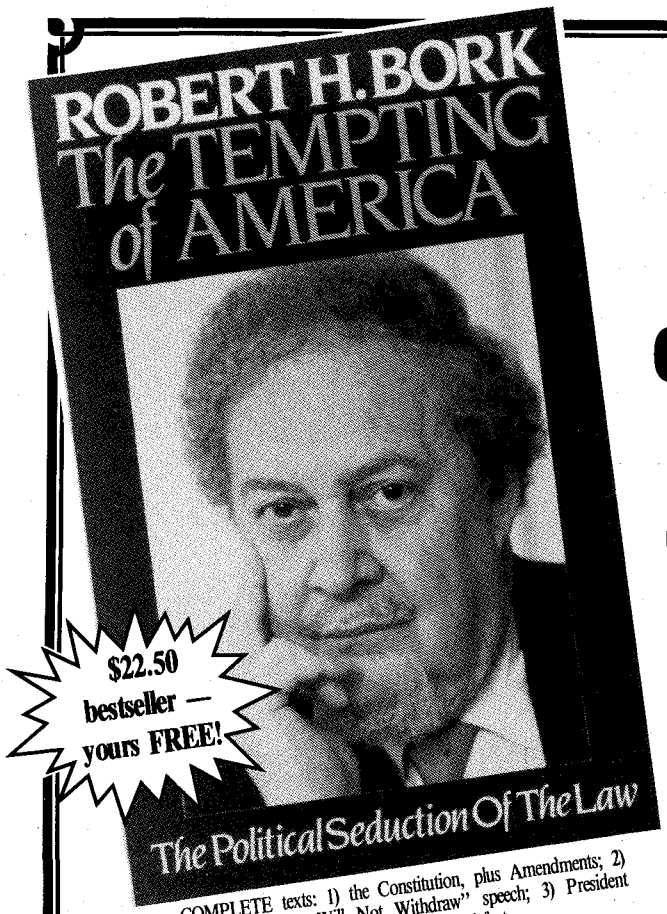

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ON THE RECORD

■ As expected, first appointments by newly elected GOP Gov. **William Weld** in Massachusetts have been liberal Republicans, leaving conservative Republicans in outer darkness yet again. Weld's candidate for new GOP state chairman is **George Bush**'s nephew **Alexander "Hap" Ellis**, but that post may be contested by conservative GOP Senate candidate **Jim Rappaport**, who failed to unseat **John Kerry**. . . . **Molly Yard**, the radical president of NOW, is delighted that Democrat **John Silber** was beaten by Weld, but **William Bennett**, Republican National Chairman–designate, was not. Silber's defeat was "too bad for the Democratic Party and for the country," said Bennett, who confesses: "There were a lot of things I disagreed with Bill Weld on, and a lot of things I agreed with John Silber on." . . . Republicans won seven new seats in Massachusetts Senate, which means they could sustain a Weld veto. . . . **Jimmy Carter**'s former chief economic advisor, **Stuart Eizenstat**, warns Democrats against tagging the GOP as party of the rich. "As between two national parties, neither of which seems focused on their problems, they [middle-class voters] will identify with the one representing the most successful in society rather than the party identified with the least successful." . . . **Steven Salmore**, GOP political consultant and professor at Rutgers, agrees: "There is no support for the belief in redistribution of income," he says, "if it means higher taxes." . . . Political analysts on both sides believe affirmative action and quotas could emerge as major issue in 1992. For the record, the 11 GOP senators who voted to override Bush's veto of the civil-rights bill of 1990 were **Rudy Boschwitz** (the only Republican senator not to win re-election), **John Chafee**, **William Cohen**, **John Danforth**, **Pete Domenici**, **David Durenberger**, **Mark Hatfield**, **John Heinz**, **James Jeffords**, **Robert Packwood**, **Arlen Specter**.

■ **Margaret Thatcher**'s resignation was cause for sadness in unexpected places. **Gennadi Gerasimov**, until recently chief spokesman for Soviet foreign ministry: "In our imagination she was the Iron Lady who would fight to the end. We will remember her as someone who made a great contribution to the good relations between the Soviet Union and the Continent." . . . Prominent Soviet parliamentarians **Ilya Zaslavasky** and **Arkady Murashev** believe that without Mrs. Thatcher and **Ronald Reagan**, the Soviet Union might never have been pressed to begin its revolutionary reforms. . . . In France, former President **Valéry Giscard d'Estaing** paid her a gracious tribute: "Margaret Thatcher will have been, with **Winston Churchill**, the greatest British prime minister in the last fifty years. She has earned our applause." . . . In Germany, Chancellor **Helmut Kohl** received an unexpected assist last week from Social Democratic former Chancellor **Helmut Schmidt**. Schmidt predicts Kohl will win the December 2 election and adds that the Social Democratic challenger, **Oskar Lafontaine**, "deserves" to lose. Kohl's Christian Democrats are leading in the polls by 45.5 per cent to 35 per cent.

■ "The peace movement took a long time clearing its throat," said **William Sloane Coffin** of SANE/Freeze, "but now it's finding its voice and I think it will be heard." He was right. The National Council of Churches has chimed in loud and clear with a resolution chiding the Bush Administration for "reckless rhetoric" and "imprudent behavior"; NCC demands immediate withdrawal from the Gulf. . . . The resolution, says columnist **Garry Wills**, "pins Bush into the crass oil and jobs sphere, which is a hard place from which to rouse Americans." . . . **Ramsey Clark** attended a peace conference in Baghdad a fortnight back and continued recent denunciations of Bush Administration for being "as unrestrained as any military dictatorship that ever lived." . . . **Michele Parish-Pixler**, executive director of Utah ACLU, is pushing for abolition of anti-polygamy laws: "I can't see that there's any rational justification for prohibiting it. As long as it is between consenting adults, it ought to be permitted."

■ First meeting of **John Randolph** Club—a new scholarly organization founded by **Ludwig von Mises** Institute, Rockford Institute, and Center for Libertarian Studies—in Dallas (Nov. 30–Dec. 1) had great lineup: **Mel Bradford** (U. of Dallas), **Murray Rothbard** (Mises Institute), **Sam Francis** (*Washington Times*), **Joe Sobran** (*NR*), **Tom Fleming** (*Chronicles*). . . . **Phyllis Schlafly**, **Gary Bauer**, and **Beverly LaHaye** have launched a Republican National Coalition for Life to whip up grassroots support for pro-life plank in next GOP national platform. . . . **Jack Kemp** was guest of honor at Claremont Institute's Annual Churchill Dinner November 30. . . . Ten days after extensive *New York Times* obituary that failed to mention that **Malcolm Muggeridge** died a Roman Catholic, *Times* carried discreet item in its "Corrections" box apologizing for the omission of "the title of his last book [*Conversion: A Spiritual Journey*], about his conversion to Catholicism in 1982."

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"Okay, heads we're in favor of a single European currency, tails we're against it."

■ **Ralph Nader** is furious with U.S. Postal Service, which failed to deliver his absentee ballot in time for his vote to be counted.

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THE WEEK

■ We now *think* he said: "Known ewe taxes."

■ The AP wire story on Michael Milken, post-sentencing, noted that in the Sixties "he studied arcane business tracts while others marched for civil rights and peace." So the seeds of villainy were sown! Meanwhile, thanks to the marchers, we have present-day Detroit and Ho Chi Minh City. You lose some, you lose some.

■ What if we had a recession and no one came? For months the media and Wall Street have spoken of "the recession" as a fact. And as it happens, newspapers, magazines, television, and Wall Street *are* in the midst of sharp downturns. But as yet there is no clear sign that the rest of the economy is, or necessarily will be. The economy grew by nearly 2 per cent in the third quarter, and unemployment has stayed in the 5 to 6 per cent band, far below the 9 per cent level reached in 1982. Gail Fosler, the Conference Board's chief economist, finds as many factors holding the economy up—low business inventories, growth in U.S. exports, and the stubborn habits of U.S. consumers—as there are negatives holding it down. H. C. Wainwright Economics, a Boston-based consulting firm, is predicting that strength in housing, autos, appliances, and retail sales will propel GNP up by 3 per cent next year, and 4 per cent in 1992. These are minority views, of course. But so was the belief that we would avoid recession—or worse—after the 1987 market crash. It may just be that the media are not the real economic message.

■ Irving Kristol has a nice answer to those who say that laws limiting legislators' time in office will prevent them from developing sufficient expertise to deal with the extremely complex nature of modern lawmaking: "It does not seem to occur to these critics that the reason the federal budget covers over a thousand pages in fine print, and that federal regulations constitute a small library, is that so much congressional 'expertise' has gone into satisfying congressional appetites or congressional interests." We might also ask: If it takes decades of experience to write the laws, how many years of study does it take to be able to obey them?

■ Meanwhile, term limitation is going forward on the state level. The current movement is the godchild of, among others, Colorado State Senator Terry Considine, Los Angeles County Supervisor Pete Schabarum, and Oklahoma businessman Lloyd Noble. These three, sponsors of ballot initiatives that triumphed while the much-hyped "popular" environmental initiatives were going down in flames, are holding a conference in San José, California, on December 13 to discuss how to help citizens of other states pass similar laws. Interested parties should contact Mr. Considine, c/o Coloradans to Limit Terms, 1700 Lincoln Street, Suite 220, Denver, Colorado 80203, or phone 303-863-9200.

■ CNN *v.* Noriega is one of those cases columnists love to expatiate on. It seems prison officials recorded Noriega's telephone calls (a not unprecedented process) and, presumably thinking that he might be planning a coup back in Panama, passed the tapes on to the State Department, which shared them with the Panamanian government, where someone leaked them to CNN—whether for money or to help Noriega is not known. Then came the restraining order—at the request of Noriega's lawyers, not the Feds—which CNN promptly violated. Has Noriega's right to a fair trial been compromised? Not that we yet know, since there's no evidence that prosecutors heard anything relevant—though Noriega lawyer Frank Rubino's discussion of privileged communications with CNN seems a breach of legal ethics. Do Sixth Amendment rights take precedence over First Amendment ones? At some point, yes, particularly when confidential material is illegally obtained. Does the press feel any obligation to respect the rule of law, U.S. national security, or the plight of the Panamanian people? No.

■ ELECTION ADDENDUM: Massachusetts voters were so disenchanted with the status quo that Donna Lambert, a 56-year-old unemployed factory worker

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"We'd lose all this if we gave up our sovereignty to Europe!"

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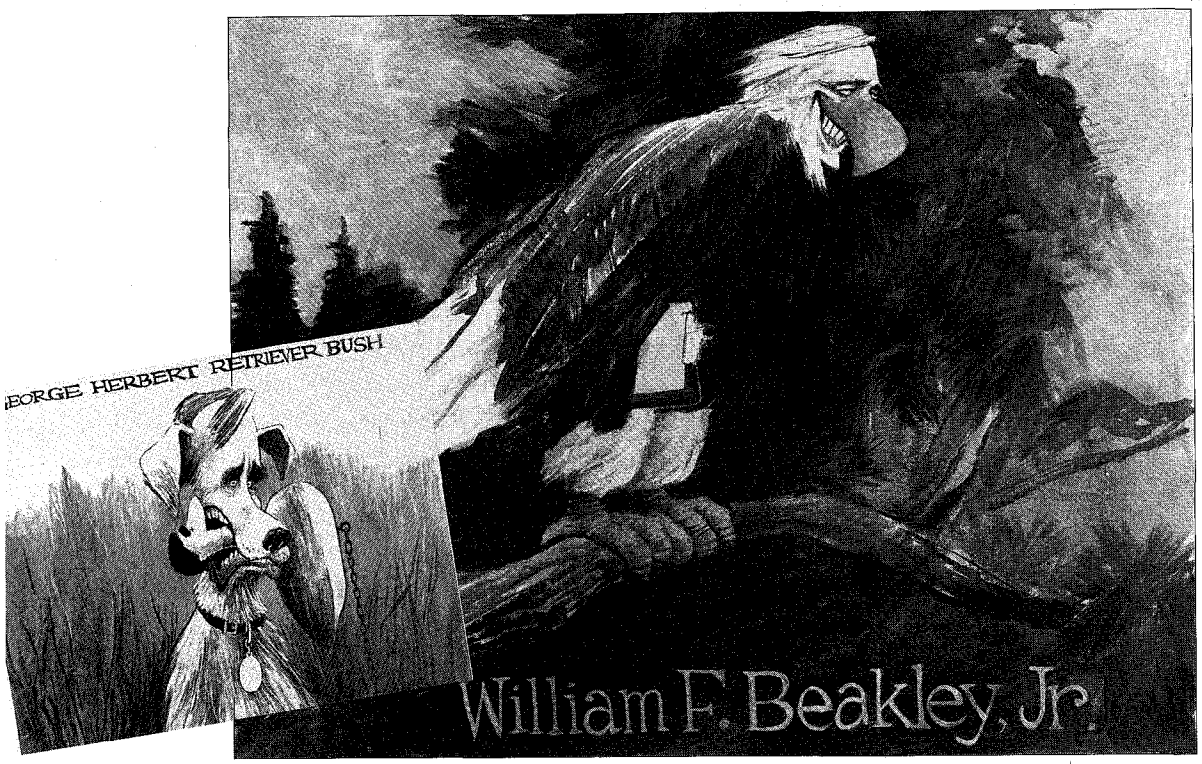

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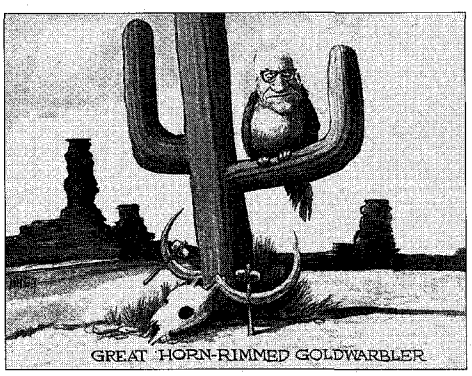

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living on unemployment compensation of $144 a week, racked up two hundred thousand votes to beat Thomas Larkin, the incumbent Democratic register of probate in Middlesex County, Massachusetts' largest county. Mrs. Lambert's campaign cost $600. Her new job pays $57,000 a year.

■ David Horowitz and Peter Collier, ex–New Left scourges of the Left, have turned their attention to public television. Their Committee on Media Integrity (Comint) is off to a promising start in life, nipping at the heels of the Los Angeles public-TV giant KCET. Comint has assailed KCET for declining to run "Fire from the Sun," a show on fusion energy, on the grounds that it was partly funded by the Department of Energy, while screening "The Abandoned Field—Free-Fire Zone," a made-in-Vietnam piece of propaganda about how the war disrupted the lives of two Vietcong collaborators. Pressure works: KCET dropped *South Africa Now*, a series that was essentially a mouthpiece for the ANC, though the station denied that Comint had anything to do with its decision. Until such time as Congress cuts public-TV funding entirely (we do have a budget crisis, don't we?), local campaigns of this sort are the only way to have an effect. The Corporation for Public Broadcasting bureaucracy, which is supposed to oversee the system, is helpless, while the stations themselves care little about fairness, unless prompted. As long as the system exists, let it have some grassroots besides left-wing producers and baby-boomers who want to see Hope & Crosby *Road to* movies.

■ Mrs. Thatcher has at least succeeded in nominating her successor. John Major, the new prime minister, is nearer to being a Thatcherite than the other two candidates. He is from a humble background (his father was a jack of several trades, including that of circus acrobat); he has "dry" economic views; and his rapid rise to the top of the greasy pole only four years after entering the Cabinet was sponsored at each stage by Mrs. Thatcher herself. Will he prove worthy of her patronage? There are few clues in his personality, which is one of understated niceness. Where Mrs. Thatcher reminds one of Bismarck in a skirt, Mr. Major is generally compared to a provincial bank manager. His civil servants praise his mastery of their briefs, but he is not famous for any remarks of his own. And ideologically too he is understated, claiming to match his economic liberalism with the social sort. Such signs are not wholly reassuring. Do the British have a Bush on their hands? Is the heroic age of conservatism dead, as John O'Sullivan asks in "From the Editor" [p. 6]? As Mr. Major might say himself, we must wait and see.

■ Remember the Great Grape Scare last year? How the FDA claimed to find two cyanide-laced grapes in a whole Chilean boatload, blamed that country, and slapped an embargo on all Chilean fruit? The embargo cost Chilean growers and exporters upward of $300 million and U.S. importers and retailers at least another $50 million; not to mention that it sent our supply of (for us) out-of-season fruit into the garbage. As if the alleged finding of two barely contaminated grapes in a boatload weren't fishy enough, a study by the University of California at Davis found that cyanide, which is volatile and dissipates very quickly, could not have been injected even as late as on the boat. In short, if the two grapes were contaminated at all, it was while they were in FDA hands, whether through simple error or, conceivably, through political activism in the bureaucratic ranks. In either case, the damage was enormous. Some of the injured parties are said to be considering suing—though it shouldn't take lawsuits to keep the FDA from behaving like a tinhorn dictator.

■ Hell hath no fury like an environmental-rights group scorned—especially if the malefactor is another environmental-rights group. Last month the mighty Greenpeace organization (Colorado chapter), in an attempt to draw attention to the dormant Rocky Flats nuclear-power plant, installed a series of Day-Glo billboards along a section of highway near the site—to the disgust of locally based groups known as Citizens against Billboards on Highway 93. The erstwhile allies are now "nitwits" and "traitors" in each other's eyes. Talk about insensitive!

■ Women students at Brown have taken to listing, on bathroom walls, the names of men who are guilty of date rape. But since inclusion in the list is based on one woman's say-so, not any sort of investigation, and since, as one of the graffitists herself said, "rape" can range from unwanted intercourse to unwanted kissing, men students at Brown have taken umbrage. We say, what did people expect, once college students asserted the right to copulation? The difference between the "no" that means "no" and the "no" that means "yes" has been known to adulterous

Godzilla and the Monster

As John Sununu's hoofs and tail
Make squiggles on the Richter scale
And Richard Darman's deeds outshine
Research from Dr. Frankenstein,
The President ignores the gore
Left on the laboratory floor,
Where House Republicans re-group
While those still able dance and whoop.

W. H. VON DREELE

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fifty-year-olds in French farces for centuries. Now it's being discovered by teenagers. Welcome to the real world, kids.

■ FLASH: Jimmy Carter has just declined to participate in the Normandy invasion or in any of the fighting in the Pacific war. At a three-day conference at Hofstra University, he told the audience: "I would offer my life to defend my family and country against an invading force, but I wouldn't be willing to give my life to invade someone else's land."

■ We hear on good authority that Smith College has prohibited what it is pleased to capitalize as Specific Manifestations of Oppression, one being "Ableism," which it defines as "oppression of the differently abled by the temporarily abled." We think the differently abled minds at Smith worry unduly. Their chances of even accidental contact with temporarily abled sanity are remote.

■ Oklahoma voters knowingly, and by a huge margin, re-elected a deceased judge rather than suffer the live candidate. If this practice spreads, we could elect a Congress worthy of the name.

Shame

UNTIL NOW we have faulted the Bush Administration's strategy in the Persian Gulf on prudential grounds. While applauding the President's resolve to beat the Iraqis back, and approving his decision to send large forces to the area, we have taken issue with matters of approach and timing. We have, for example, urged the early prosecution of a sustained air offensive, rather than a short and costly land war. We have urged him to build the necessary domestic consent for a war by convening Congress and by speaking more eloquently than heretofore to the American people. We have asked for a better enunciation of true American objectives than he has offered, and we have deplored his excessive reliance on the UN. We have called attention to the importance of destroying Iraqi nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons facilities, as well as turning Saddam Hussein out of Kuwait.

All this, however, did not detract from our admiration for President Bush's firmness and our appreciation of the basic correctness of his policy. Now, however, we must point to an act at once foolish and wrong—the President's meeting in Geneva with Syrian president Hafez el-Assad. In 1983 this butcher's clients, at his direction, slew 241 Americans in the Marine compound in Beirut. A Palestinian terrorist group, operating under Assad's protection, murdered 270 men, women, and children flying on a Pan American jumbo jet two years ago. These represent some (not all) of his American victims, not to mention the hundreds of bound Christian prisoners of war recently shot, after surrender, by Assad's men; the wife and children of Dany Chamoun, the Lebanese Christian leader, killed by Assad's assassination squads a few weeks ago; and the twenty thousand inhabitants of the town of Hama annihilated by Assad's artillery for the crime of living in the same town as a few hundred enemies of the regime. It is revolting to see our President smiling genially in this man's presence.

Sometimes, no doubt, one must deal with one devil to defeat another—we did that in World War II, although surely we learned from our alliance with Stalin the perils of being gulled by a dictator. But Syria offers no great strategic bonus to us. The Syrians have contributed a paltry few thousand soldiers to the defense of Saudi Arabia, and frankly we don't want more. Not only are their forces technically incompatible with ours: they have a nasty habit of overstaying their welcome. Assad has used the Gulf crisis to gobble up Lebanon without a squawk from an Administration that loudly deplored excessive Israeli force in putting down a large-scale riot. And Assad most certainly is not, as President Bush so incredibly put it, "standing up against this aggression." He is capitalizing on it—plunging a dagger into the back of a mortal enemy, bringing his dark dream of Greater Syria closer to reality, wheedling funds from frightened oil-rich Arabs, playing for readmission into civilized society.

Surely one lesson of the sorry tale of American–Iraqi relations is that we became so obsessed with one Middle Eastern villain—the Ayatollah Khomeini—that we fatuously indulged another. We may be making the same mistake again, taking at face value, for example, Assad's ludicrous claim to be unaware of the Lockerbie plot executed by a terrorist group under his control. This is not Realpolitik but self-delusion, not hard-headed foreign policy but credulity masquerading as diplomacy. It is folly from a pragmatic as well as a moral point of view.

Can This Administration Be Saved?

STUMBLING OFF a disappointing election and a humiliating budget deal, the Bush Administration must somehow find its bearings. How to find them is the subject of an intense debate within the White House.

On the one hand is a coterie of junior-level aides calling itself the "*perestroika* group." James Pinkerton is a spokesman, Jack Kemp a Cabinet-level ally. The *perestroika* group wants a "new paradigm" for

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race and poverty issues, based on "empowerment." Its members also favor a campaign for economic growth focused on a capital-gains tax cut. Budget Director Richard Darman, meanwhile, dismisses all such talk as a "faddish" quest for "new ideas." Darman's ideal of politics is a twilight struggle of experts and wheeler-dealers over hot buttons like "program design" and "resource allocation."

Darman should consider that people turn to new ideas only when old ideas, such as Darman's budget deal, fail. "Empowerment" is an attempt to approach race and poverty through policies—school choice, the sale of public housing to tenants—that will benefit blacks and the poor, and that will get the GOP out of the fruitless spending contests with Democrats that it always loses. A similar paradigm shift on taxes helped give us eight years of Ronald Reagan and four of George Bush, or didn't Darman notice?

The questions joined in the paradigm debate are real, and it will be interesting to see, from the degree to which the State of the Union address tilts one way or the other, who "wins." But the battle of the aides should not obscure an essential fact of presidential leadership, which is that Presidents ul-

RIGHT DATA

The More the Merrier

A POPULATION time bomb hangs over the world, threatening humanity with overcrowding, starvation, and conflict. So argued the World Bank and most other international development agencies—until recently. But the stellar economic success of many "overcrowded" countries has led some economists to revise their thinking on the role of population:

POPULATION MATTERS

	Population Per Square Mile	GNP Per Capita: Dollars, 1988	GNP Per Capita: Average Annual Percentage Growth, 1965–1988
Singapore	11,910	9,070	7.2
Hong Kong	9,744	9,220	6.3
South Korea	1,189	3,600	6.8
Japan	844	21,020	4.3
India	658	340	1.8
China	288	330	5.4
Argentina	30	2,520	0.0

The population of capitalist Hong Kong grew from 700,000 in 1945 to 5.6 million in 1987, yet earnings rose at unprecedented rates. Singapore also flourished, and is now forced to import labor to alleviate a labor shortage. Of course these are small city-states, but does anyone think that a large hinterland attached to them would be as poor as Mainland China?

At the other extreme, sparsely populated, statist Argentina has stagnated for at least 25 years.

In the short run Malthus is right: another baby or another immigrant invariably lowers living standards for those around him. Over periods measured in decades, however, economists (including Nobel laureate Simon Kuznets, perhaps the greatest economic historian of modern times) have found no evidence that population growth decreases economic growth. Since World War II, per-person income in less-developed countries has grown faster than that of developed countries despite far faster population growth in the developing world.

How does population growth spur economic growth? In *Population Matters* (1990) Julian Simon notes that American fathers work the equivalent of two to five weeks a year extra for each additional child, more than offsetting the mother's withdrawal from the workforce. Population growth increases the demand for investment and reduces the risk of overbuilding in housing and other highly cyclical industries. Other things being equal, countries with large populations enjoy higher and more rapidly growing output per worker.

Largely unnoticed amidst the current economic gloom, the U.S. seems to be pulling out of a long demographic slump. The nation's fertility rate climbed to an estimated 2.1 lifetime births per woman in the first half of 1990, the highest figure since 1971. Based on the earlier rates, the Census Bureau had forecast a declining U.S. population by the year 2038.

Further, the new immigration law provides for a 30 per cent annual increase in slots, from 540,000 to 700,000, with the number of those admitted because of specific skills increasing proportionately more. But we are in no danger of becoming a nation of immigrants: there were 800,000 immigrants in 1980, and at the turn of the century immigration topped one million for six consecutive years. Only 6 per cent of the U.S. population today is foreign born—less than in Britain, France, and Germany; far less than in Canada and Australia.

—ED RUBENSTEIN

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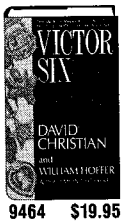

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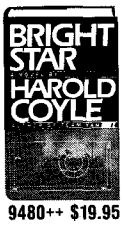

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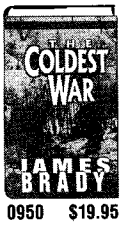

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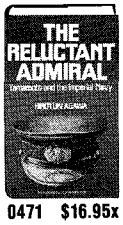

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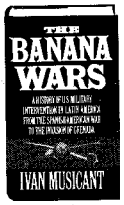

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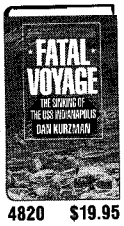

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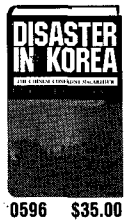

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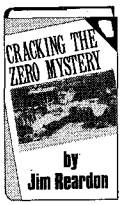

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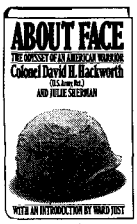

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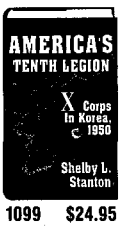

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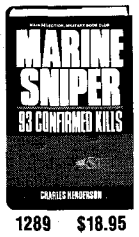

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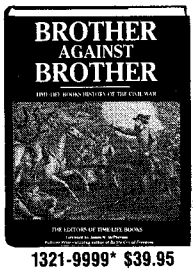

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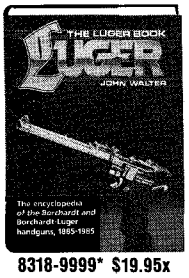

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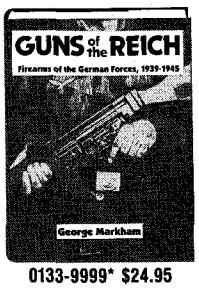

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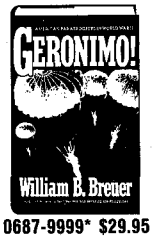

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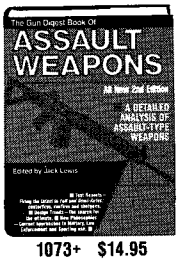

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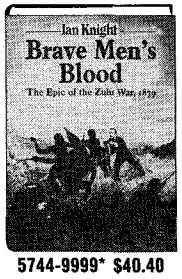

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timately have the kind of Administration they want.

Throughout his political career, George Bush has never had a burning interest in domestic policy. He resisted the last Republican paradigm shift—on taxes—and not coincidentally, lost the 1980 Republican nomination. For a few years, it seemed as if Bush, chastened by experience, had become at least interested in new political thinking, if not himself a generator of it. Chief of Staff John Sununu looked to be an honest broker who would give conservatives a fair hearing.

Then came the retreat on taxes, and the long disaster of the budget. The question arises, Is Bush reverting to type? Richard Nixon once told Theodore White that the country "could run itself domestically without a President." Bush seems to be governing on that model. If the Administration stays its present course, which is no course at all, it will not be because the Machiavellian Darman has seized power, but because the President prefers to let polls and power-brokers generate policy at home, while he visits troops in distant climes.

Good-Bye—or, Au Revoir

MRS. THATCHER'S resignation has been greeted with incomprehension by most people outside Britain, and indeed by much of the British public. Her government, thrice elected by large majorities, had 19 months of its current term to run. Its present majority was threatened neither by a scandal like Watergate, nor by an issue that divided her party as the Irish Question divided the Liberal Party in the nineteenth century. And she remains in glowing health. What did her in?

One can cite a number of her policies that led to dissension within the Tory Party and to electoral unpopularity. The local poll tax is the most obvious. Its major flaw is not that it contains some inequities and anomalies—all forms of taxation known to man are unjust by some measure—but that it is new. Voters pay old taxes in sorrow and new ones in anger. The most anti-tax politician in postwar Britain thus became identified with a particularly unpopular tax. She was damaged still more, however, by Britain's high rate of inflation and by the high interest rates imposed to curb it. In a nation of home-owners like the British, who rely on variable-rate mortgages, a rise in interest rates inflicts a deep political wound. The fact that this inflation had been largely caused by her former chancellor of the exchequer's policy of "shadowing the Deutsche Mark"—a policy she had opposed in 1987 and finally brought to a halt in 1988—was glossed over. Perhaps the majority of Tory MPs and economic journalists, who had strongly supported Nigel Lawson at the time, did not like to be reminded of his (and their) mistake. Finally, her opposition to vague visions of rapid European political and monetary integration, though probably popular with most voters, offended a majority of her Cabinet and a passionate minority of Tory MPs who see the European Community as both a new nation and a new career.

None of this would have mattered the traditional two hoots, however, if Mrs. Thatcher had not been lagging in the opinion polls. Forgetful of the years 1981 and 1986, when the prime minister had been at least as unpopular, Tory backbenchers convinced themselves that this time she would be unable to recover in time to win an election due no later than July 1992. Her challenger, Mr. Michael Heseltine, presented himself as a winner. And the damage was done.

Even then Mrs. Thatcher won an absolute majority with 18 to spare in the first round. What finished her off was a complex electoral system which requires more than a majority, and the character of Tory MPs who fully justified the old gibe that "the Tory Party never panics—except in a crisis." Her supporters and Cabinet colleagues quickly convinced themselves, on very little evidence, that she could not win the second round and colluded to persuade her to withdraw and avoid the humiliation of outright defeat. Shattered by the defection of her closest ideological allies, she resigned and allowed her chancellor of the exchequer, John Major, and her foreign secretary, Douglas Hurd, to enter the contest.

It was a sad and shabby ending to a great prime-ministership, but it was redeemed almost instantly by her superb speech on the parliamentary motion of no confidence in her government. This was political theater of the highest order: a prime minister, still undefeated electorally, who had been brought down by a mixture of resentment, cowardice, and palace intrigue, routing the Labor opposition in debate and shaming the fainthearts on her own side by her courage, self-possession, and prowess in argument. She departed the political scene in a great blaze of admiration.

He's Making a List

Jolly old St. Nicholas,
  Lean your ear this way:
When you hit the White House roof
  With your deer and sleigh,
Please stuff Barry's early book
  Where the socks are hung,
Lest, by Christmas Eve next year,
  I become unstrung.

W. H. VON DREELE

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It is not yet time to settle her place in history. But her partnership with Ronald Reagan—together they defeated the last great Soviet offensive to win the cold war—her reduction of overwhelming trade-union power, her transformation of Britain into a modern, competitive enterprise economy, her pioneering of the worldwide drive toward privatization and free markets, even her taming of the Labor Party so that it became an imaginable government—all these give her at least a claim on the title of Britain's greatest peacetime prime minister. Her victory in the Falklands War and her recent dispatch of almost thirty thousand British troops to assist the U.S. in the Gulf remind us that she was no mean war leader as well.

The U.S. will miss Mrs. Thatcher. Her successor, John Major, is a friend of this country; but he, like the two other contenders for 10 Downing Street, lacks her instinctive sympathy for American values and perhaps her willingness to support American leadership on difficult occasions like the Libyan bombing (but not, alas, Grenada). If, moreover, the new prime minister's willingness to endorse European integration leads him to go along with the European Community's burgeoning protectionism, we will have acute cause to regret both Mrs. Thatcher's passing and our failure to support her fight within the EC for a looser, free-market Europe while she was still around.

For conservatives, Mrs. Thatcher's resignation is particularly sad. She spoke our language in every sense, pioneered our causes, fought alongside us in cold wars with both the Soviet Union and the Keynesian economic establishment. We will be sorry to see her go. But is she really going? At 65 years of age, five years younger than Ronald Reagan when he first became President, in good health and blessed with exceptional energy, endowed with experience of government and unrivaled international prestige, Mrs. Thatcher does not seem cut out for a life of spoiling her grandchildren and taking tea at Harrods. We wish her a long life and a short retirement.

Junk Sentence for Milken

SO MICHAEL MILKEN is now going to jail. You might assume that his offenses must have been serious indeed, considering that the rapists and near-murderers of the Central Park jogger got sentences of five to ten years, while the judge handed Milken a flat ten-year sentence. Instead, the Milken case shows that equality under law does not apply in extreme cases, such as the crime of symbolizing a "greedy decade."

Milken's punishment was so unexpected that even members of the press, who had brayed against him for years, collectively gasped in the courtroom when the sentence was announced. One reason is that the more that people learned about the prosecution case, the weaker it looked. What started out as Rudy Giuliani's bully-boy 98-count indictment alleging insider trading and "racketeering" under RICO eventually came down to six pleas on crimes so petty that if Milken had been anyone else the punishment would have been a stern letter from securities regulators.

His crimes, which a jury never got to consider, were far from transgressions of the Ten Commandments. It is no doubt wrong to aid and abet the false securities filing of a client, but this is not a sin that normally earns a jail term. Ivan Boesky traded suitcases of cash for stolen insider information, yet got only three years because he cooperated with prosecutors. Federal Judge Kimba Wood agreed that Milken was no insider trader and that junk bonds were not some kind of Ponzi scheme. Instead, she said Milken deserved more punishment as a deterrent precisely because his technical and regulatory crimes were amorphous and any victims, therefore, remain hard to find. It's apparently better to mug someone in the street at high noon than to step just over the line of some hazy regulations. This logic mocks the idea that punishment must fit the crime.

Still, the fact that the Milken sentence trashed the rule of law to serve the bald political purpose of bashing an era of takeovers and junk bonds is only one of the problems with that sentence. The greater problem is that all the prosecutor's journalists and all the prosecutor's judges won't be able to put the booming economy of the 1980s back together again. Milken was the symbol of much that was good, including junk bonds that gave small entrepreneurs access they no longer have to capital. The would-be MCIs and Turner Broadcastings of the 1990s instead face stillbirth, strangled by the credit crunch created in large part by overzealous regulators.

Gorbachev in Irons

WHEN FRIEDRICH ENGELS wrote of the "withering away" of the state, he did not have Mikhail Gorbachev's present situation in mind. He was imagining a peaceful transformation created by the disappearance of classes and the class struggle. What we are witnessing now is the disintegration of a totally bankrupt ruling class desperately trying to retain its privileged status against the rage of a frustrated population riven by ethnic and social fissures.

When Gorbachev set out on his reforms, he did not see *glasnost* and *perestroika* as basic changes in the

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system but as modernization measures designed to bring new, hungry soldiers into competition with the lazy, complacent old-timers. The unintended consequence was a flood of savage criticism of the Party itself, the demoralization of the cadres, and the eruption of timeless ethnic hatreds. As that marvelous parable *The Man Who Would Be King* illuminates, sovereignty is a very fragile concept; once it was clear that Gorbachev was mortal, that the *apparat* had lost its killer instinct, the volcano went off. Since then he has been frantically trying to reestablish his lost "respect."

It is interesting to note that the more trouble he discovers, the more medals he collects. Never, we are told, has any Soviet *vozd*, even Stalin, held so many important positions. Indeed, it is suggested that he may be positioning himself to seize "total power" in the Soviet state. Leaving aside the point that Stalin didn't need all sorts of de jure jobs as long as his executioners were loyal, this assumes that there still is some entity we can call the "Soviet state." Anyone who believes this must also have faith in the "Lebanese state," and the existence of an "Arab nation." A. N. Whitehead's term for it was "the fallacy of assumed concreteness."

In short, there is no Soviet state or Soviet economy: there is a political charade playing in Moscow, and food, fuel, and housing crises everywhere. In all this chaos there seem to be two organized enclaves: the KGB and what John Roche calls ["Can the U.S. Survive the Seventeenth Century?" Dec. 3] the Russian Autonomous Nuclear Republic, that is, the roughly four hundred thousand men of the Strategic Nuclear Forces directly under the Supreme High Command. (Reportedly they are almost all ethnic Great Russians.) The Iraq problem is trivial by comparison with the possibilities of independent nuclear initiatives. How good are the electronic "locks"? Who controls the codes? We are not talking just about ICBMs; suppose an Armenian military commander got fire-control of some 155-mm. nuclear rounds? Might he be tempted to lob a few at the Azerbaidzhanis?

This is a bleak Hobbesian picture which inevitably raises the question: What should we do? The great chorus chanting that we should "Save Gorbachev" ignores the question antecedent, namely, Could we save him if we tried? If we dumped all our agricultural surpluses in his lap they would rot as did the Russian potato crop. On the basis of his track-record so far, we have no probative evidence that Gorbachev has the foggiest idea how to halt the centripetal forces that are shredding the so-called Soviet Union. Or how to control the Nuclear Republic.

As the Snow Flies

Recalling Canute, whose decree
Left waves sloshing over his knee,
  Writs Gorby hands down
  Don't dent lines downtown,
Though vodka decants like the sea.

W. H. VON DREELE

Bennett's New Deal

NEXT TO George Bush, there is no one in this Administration who has served longer in more varied jobs than Bill Bennett: director of the National Endowment for the Humanities, secretary of education, drug czar. Now he has been named to succeed Lee Atwater, the ailing chief of the Republican National Committee. He takes the job at a time when the Republican Party is more fractious than it has been at any other time since Watergate.

There are some, including a good many of Bennett's close friends, who worry that this appointment is merely a sop to the Right after the disastrous White House performance over the past year. Perhaps. But if George Bush wanted to appoint a lapdog it's unlikely he would have selected the outspoken Bennett. Indeed, our understanding is that the director had a frank meeting with the President, and that he has been promised a say in policies he will later have to defend. That can only be for the better. Say what you will about Lee Atwater, for example, but even critics concede that had he been well during the budget summit Bush's tax pledge would not have been abandoned.

For his part Bennett wasted little time in setting a new tone by attacking quotas and defending the ad run by Senator Jesse Helms (R., N.C.) on affirmative action. True enough, it takes some juggling to reconcile an RNC chairman who speaks like that with the kind of groveling the White House did before Ted Kennedy to get a civil-rights bill Mr. Bush could sign. Our hope, not unreasonable, is that the Bush Administration now recognizes its lack of direction and has accordingly made Bennett the compass.

Critics point out that Bennett has had little experience at fundraising and generally suffering the many fools who contribute to any political party. But Bennett has proved before that he can take a nothing job and make a difference. Our worry, consequently, is not the RNC's future but Bennett's. Should Bush continue down the path of me-too-but-less Republicanism, should Darman remain ensconced in the Cabinet, and should statements by Bennett not be backed up with actions by Bush, the new RNC chief might well find himself in a frustrating role.

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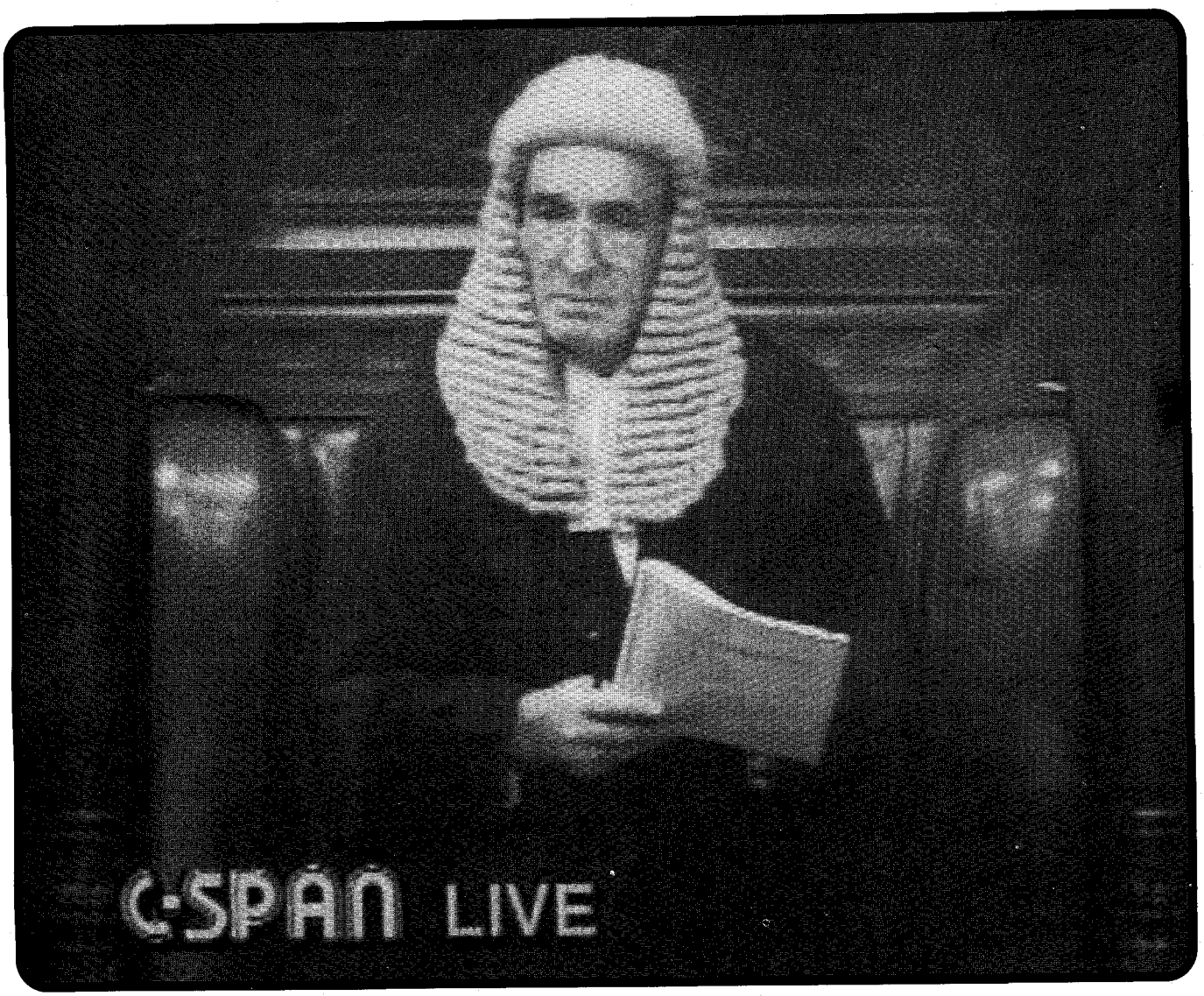

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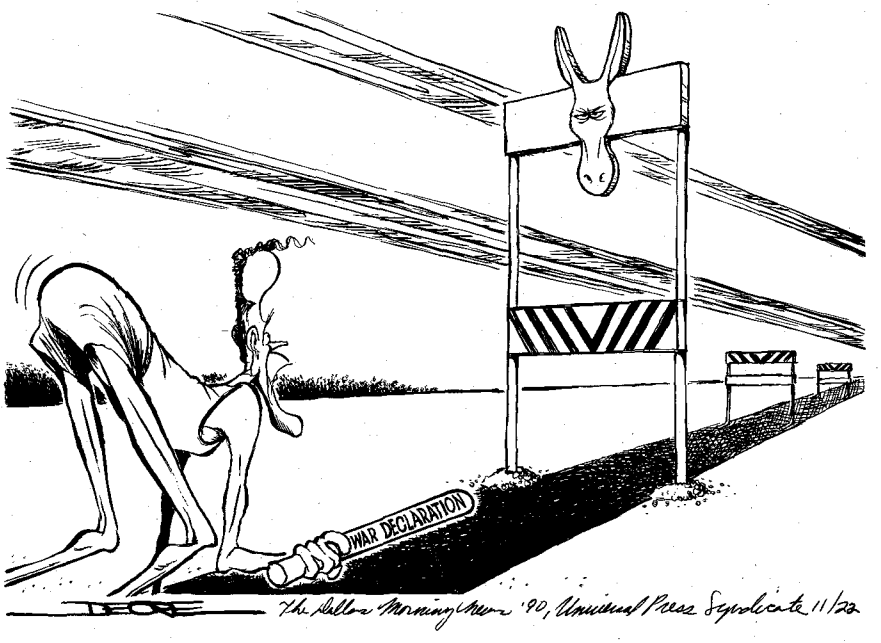

If in the end Bennett is forced to choose between his post or his principles, we have no doubt which he'll take. In the meantime there is much work to be done. In an 1857 speech at a Republican banquet in Chicago, Abraham Lincoln maintained that the party's raison d'être was "to reinaugurate the good old 'central ideas' of the Republic." While it is rather distressing that a sitting Republican President apparently is not up to the job himself, we can take some comfort in the fact that he has now appointed a man who is.

AIDS Fear In Rural America

'QUICK, HONEY! Grab the cows, hogs, and chickens and let's git! AIDS is a-comin' to the farm!" Or so the National Commission on AIDS (NCA) would have us believe in its third and latest report. The NCA is the propaganda unit in the "War on AIDS"; it takes testimony from homosexual activist groups, releases periodic pronouncements, and gives us few statistics and many anecdotes. In the latest report, the NCA chairman, Dr. June Osborn, states: "Many parts of rural America are about to be blind-sided by the epidemic." The report refers to an "alarming" rate of increase in rural areas, 37 per cent last year. A breakdown of the data is not available for previous years, but it can safely be assumed that this increase is significantly lower than that of the year before, which, in turn, was significantly lower than that of the year before that, because that has been the almost universal trend among U.S. AIDS cases—overall, by risk group, and by geographic location, the epidemic is flattening.

The purpose of this propaganda is to draw attention away from the fact that in urban areas—that is, the places where the epidemic hit first and hardest—AIDS cases increased a mere 5 per cent last year. It obfuscates the reality that AIDS is for the most part a big-city problem spread by activities tolerated more in New York and San Francisco than in Des Moines and Oshkosh. But don't just blame the NCA for using this ploy. A severely mau-maued Congress has appropriated $2.9 billion over the next six years for AIDS treatment *on top of* current AIDS funding, which already outweighs that for every other disease. And yes, it is being touted as a rural-relief bill even though the great majority of the money will go to major cities. Folks outside those cities have compassion for AIDS victims, as should we all, but sooner or later they—and the public as a whole—are a-gonna git tired of bein' fed hogwash.

Malcolm Muggeridge, R I P

ALTHOUGH HE attained the age of 87, Malcolm Muggeridge was not at all one of those people of whom, seeing the death notice in the paper, one says, "Oh! I thought he had been dead for years." Muggeridge remained active, and influential, nearly to the end, as his legion of admirers around the world can attest.

In this issue we are running WFB's recollections of Muggeridge ("On the Right," p. 62), and next issue—fittingly, the Christmas issue—we will run a more extended appreciation.

William French Smith, R I P

WILLIAM FRENCH SMITH, Ronald Reagan's first attorney general, fell somewhat in the shade of his successor, Ed Meese, who was more colorful, more conservative, and (hence?) more beleaguered. When President Reagan, at Smith's urging, nominated Sandra Day O'Connor to fill the first vacancy on the Supreme Court, there was some grumbling in the ranks that the Justice Department had not pushed a Bork-like fire-eater. On the other hand, Mrs. O'Connor was actually confirmed. Attorney General Smith was strong in his resistance to affirmative-action quotas, and to what he called "outmoded and exotic" antitrust doctrines.

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Smith belonged to the Kitchen Cabinet, that group of Californians who had been impressed with the 1964 version of "The Speech," and who decided that Ronald Reagan would be good for the state, and for the nation. Smith seldom spoke, but when he did, he was always worth hearing. Not one of his obituaries had an ill word to say about him, so great was his decency—the quality he had most in common, perhaps, with the man he served so long.

NOTES & ASIDES

■ Dear Bill:

"Abolitionists are hoist by their own petard"?—only just barely possible if you are using the word as the French expression for breaking wind. Otherwise one can only be hoist *with* one's own petard, which is a small bomb used to break down doors, etc., by explosion.

Most sincerely,
Bill Berger
Denver, Colo.

Dear Bill: You're right. Pardonnez-nous. Cordially,
Bill

■ Dear Mr. Buckley:

In a recent NATIONAL REVIEW, on the left-hand side of the page, under "From the Editor," I found the headline, "By the Left, March." That made sense to me; an article about the Left on the left page. However, in every issue of NATIONAL REVIEW are articles by you entitled, "On the Right," but these all start on the left-hand side of the page. I have tried to read your lead column "On the Right" on my right but then all the printing was upside down and backward. Using a mirror did not help.

If you continue to publish "On the Right" on the left side of the page, I suggest for journalistic accuracy that you title the column "On the Left." But knowing your conservative ways that would never do. How about publishing your lead column starting on the right-hand side and continuing on every other page? This would make your title "On the Right" 100 per cent accurate. However, it could mess up the articles editor and the printer, and so I suggest that you publish "On the Right" starting on an odd-numbered page with the second page being a foldout as in *Playboy* magazine. This would make your column totally accurate in every way and "On the Right" would indeed be on the right. What do you think?

Respectively,
The Reverend John Frederick Koch
Chesterfield, Mo.

Dear Reverend Koch: Your idea is, quite simply—well, inspired! Cordially,
WFB

■ Dear Mr. Buckley:

I am extremely surprised at your apparent lack of interest in the orthodox activities of the Episcopal Synod of America. I realize that you might be somewhat biased as a Roman Catholic and choose to represent the conservative Roman view more thoroughly than the conservative Anglican view, but considering that you have among your occasional contributors Mr. Bill Murchison, the editor of *Foundations*, the Synod's monthly newsletter, I am appalled at the lack of information regarding the Synod to appear in your magazine.

As my husband and I have subscribed to your magazine for many years, I feel that you are more likely to give accurate coverage of what is really taking place in the Episcopal Church today than is the national press. If you lack sufficient staff to cover these issues, I would be more than happy to provide you with information, as although I am a teacher by profession I do quite a bit of journalistic work for both the Diocese of Forth Worth and the Synod.

You have, for a great many years, been at the forefront in covering accurately that news which the general media slant to suit their purposes. I, therefore, am asking your magazine to provide more coverage of the Synod in your true journalistic tradition.

Thank you,
Sue Seibert
Mineral Wells, Tex.

Dear Mrs. Seibert: Three religion editors back, our religion editor was Gerhart Niemeyer, who (see my book *Overdrive*) was consecrated a priest in the Anglican Church when he turned seventy. My wife is an Anglican, and I see Anglicans everywhere I go. But they are not as numerous as Catholics, and do not set trends, religious or social, which I am sure is an answer to your prayers. By all means send any information you wish to us, or directly to our religion editor, Richard John Neuhaus, Religion and Public Life, Suite 400, 156 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10010. Cordially,
WFB

■ Dear Mr. Buckley:

You put the news media on a pedestal when you continually refer to them as "the media." Remember, there are other media: transportation, advertising, and even communications. At least conservative NATIONAL REVIEW should not revere the liberals—their doing it themselves is already too much.

Cordially,
Mickey McArthur
Sonoita, Ariz.

Dear Mr. McArthur: Don't follow you, sorry. We review the media the way pigeons review statues. (Original: W. Sheed.) Cordially,
—WFB

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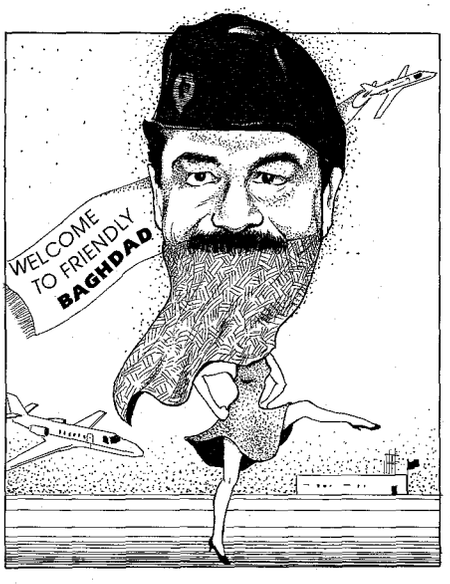
ON THE SCENE

Ministry of Peace

DONALD KIRK



Jennifer Lawson

BAGHDAD

THE MINISTRY of information and culture, in a drab concrete block set among other equally featureless buildings, has one distinction that may make it unique among government propaganda mills. It is really an adjunct of the secret police, and the people responsible for feeding those "We want peace, but we are ready to fight" quotes to the reporters trooping through on one-week or ten-day visas are police agents.

A visitor on one of those short-term visas gets his first taste of the ministry's pervasive influence when he arrives at the airport. When the immigration official examining the visitor's passport discovers he is a journalist, he tells him to wait. In a few minutes a polite young man from the ministry arrives, welcomes the visitor to Iraq, and whisks him right through immigration and customs with no further questions, not even a cursory look at his bags. The information-ministry man then escorts the visitor to a waiting taxi and takes him to the Al Rashid Hotel, which happens to be a government-run facility only a few minutes' ride from the ministry itself.

On one side of the Al Rashid's lobby is a desk manned by half a dozen more information officials; facing it across the lobby is another desk manned by "peace and reconciliation" officials. There is no doubt they all work for the same organization, the secret police. The desk on the right is for the journalists, who have to register there before they can go to the front desk and register for a room. The desk on the left is for members of international peace groups come to express their opposition to war, to plead for "compromise through negotiations," or to intercede on behalf of any or all of the two thousand foreigners being held in the country. The visitors, correspondents and peace-seekers alike, are all welcome here. They all serve the same purpose, in the Iraqi view: the purpose of deflecting allied will, of postponing and finally putting off all thought of attack by the forces massed in the Saudi desert.

The architect of this strategy, Latif Nasif Jassim, is one of the few information ministers anywhere in the world with a place at the heart of his country's power structure. He attends meetings with the stream of foreign envoys, former national leaders, and parliamentarians who pass in and out of here daily. He is seen, in his olive green military-style uniform, on television with President Saddam Hussein and his generals. He appears, in charcoal grey double-breasted coat and trousers, at crowded press conferences in his softly carpeted office, handing out crumbs of "news" seasoned with quotes on which journalists feed with the voracity of half-starved refugees. There is no doubt, after all, that he does not just reflect government policy; he also helps to make it. There is also no doubt that he is the only figure with any influence at all whom a reporter is sure to see before the week is up.

A visitor will probably be invited to pay his first visit to Jassim within a few hours after checking in. There is a long wait in Jassim's office while a clutch of television cameras train their sights on the corner sofa seat he will occupy. There is a portentous pause. Then Jassim steps into the room from his private office, with an English-language interpreter in tow; Jassim is all modest smiles, bestowing intimate little greetings on the journalists he knows, even those whose work he doesn't like. And then he's off on another set of explanations of "Arab hospitality" and "Moslem tradition" and the way Iraqi "hosts" maintain the virtuous code of their forebears in their gracious treatment of their "foreign guests." Jassim manages to pull off this defense of holding foreign contractors as human shields at strategic bombing targets without a trace of a cynical smile, much less a smirk. He puts on the show several nights a week with some variations—one night Egyptian leader Hosni Mubarak is "nothing," the next night President Bush is "a liar." There's never a word, of course, about chemical-weapons plants, biological warfare, the killing of civilians in Kuwait. Nobody asks about such things; the answers would be too predictable.

There is a paradox here, in that most reporters plead for extensions of their short-stay visas while most other foreigners in Iraq want desperately to get out. In denying the extensions Jassim's aides say they wish to give as many correspondents as possible a chance to come and "learn"—and they don't have space enough to receive them all at once. A more plausible answer is that Jassim believes reporters who stay on might learn too much and start writing news and analysis that would do more than reflect his briefings and the backgrounders from the embassies. Reporters, in any case, may start thinking twice about wanting to stay on. "Everything will change, even the situation in the hotel," Jassim says with a knowing smile when a reporter asks him where

Mr. Kirk, a veteran foreign correspondent, previously visited Iraq in 1987 as a war correspondent for USA Today.

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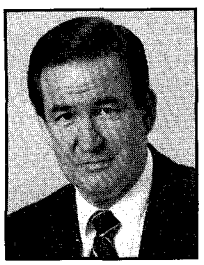
– Richard Nixon



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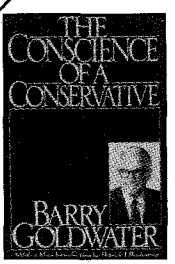

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all the journalists will go if the Americans attack. "We will put you in a good place, in a shelter." That "good place," naturally, would be the ministry of information—with the foreign press finally taking a turn as "human shields."

Under the circumstances, a reporter can assume that ministry agents are bugging phone calls, that taxi drivers report in detail on the movements of their customers, and that people on the street may be watching and informing too. For that matter, the minders in the front lobby often accompany journalists on interviews. Quote-getting, inevitably, devolves into an absurd game in which the real difficulty, for a jet-lagged visitor from several time zones away, is staying awake through the penultimate "We are ready to die for our country" declaration. Even a visit to Mustansiriya University is disappointing. Accompanied this time not by a ministry minder but by a genial medical professor, I could not find a single student among the dozen or so I met who would voice anything other than avid support of every aspect of government policy.

The closest one is likely to get to finding disillusionment is in the *souks* and coffee shops. Pause during a bargaining session over the price of a gold bracelet or a carpet, and it's possible, just barely possible, to get a merchant or a clerk to admit that he's "tired" of the whole idea of war after eight years of pointless conflict with Iran. Linger for a second cup of coffee in one of the sparkling little restaurants near the Tigris River, and one might, just might, fall into a desultory conversation that will spill over into the question of whether the people "want war" or are "ready for war." Such conversations, though, are not usual—and invariably the visitor is asked, "Do not quote me, mister, please."

Through any kind of encounter here runs an undercurrent of unreality. One has trouble remembering that war is more than likely, perhaps unavoidable. There is no sense on the streets, in the *souks*, of war fever. There are few troops visible other than those guarding government buildings and communications facilities. Increasingly, anti-aircraft weapons are sprouting from roofs of tall buildings, but Iraqis seem to think they've seen most of them before, during the war with Iran. An afternoon, a day, a week here can go by almost serenely as one strolls through marketplaces, tools along expressways in Toyota taxis, even jokes sardonically with the minders who eventually get about as bored with you as you are with them and let you go out on your own.

Finally you realize the ministry of information's greatest triumph. Very few people think war is going to happen. They believe the talks with foreign diplomats and envoys will dribble on, peace-group representatives will always be there, and, finally, Saddam Hussein will show up on television some day saying the Americans are pulling back and the "foreign guests" are bidding their fond farewells. The ministry of information and culture, through its internal apparatus, cultivates the sense of peace as carefully as it does the foreign visitors. There are few if any air-raid or civil-defense drills. There are no checkpoints inside Baghdad—though there are plenty of them on the approaches to the city and, one hears, in Kuwait.

The effort to keep up an appearance of normality is apparent in the lights glittering at night over shops and restaurants, in the sounds of ear-piercing music screeched out by Egyptian singers in nightclubs that don't close until 2 A.M. Like any "normal" world center, in fact, Baghdad never really closes. You can still find a lonely stall in which to sip a coffee or buy a snack in the pre-dawn. There is no thought of curfew, it seems, and little real fear, here in the capital, that food supplies will run out, despite the allied blockade and limited rationing. Did not Saddam lift the rationing of gasoline after only six days? people ask. "We have problems," is a typical line one hears in a fleeting coffee-shop chat. "But there will be peace in a few months. We do not worry."

The government could change the mood at once, but clearly officials believe life is more secure, safer, this way. The logic of keeping up the calm is clear—once panic sets in, then no one is safe, least of all Saddam and his Revolutionary Council, not to mention the minister of information, Latif Jassim, who has so astutely helped to create this artificial environment in which war is still not quite imaginable beyond the statement-making and the posturing. □

The Enemy of My Enemy

JACK FOWLER

Tim Bower

WASHINGTON, D.C.

EVER SINCE the 1984 election, Guy Vander Jagt (R., Mich.) has been the target of conservative Republican scorn for the failure of the National Republican Congressional Committee, of which he has been chairman since 1975, to help Republicans win congressional campaigns. Carl Pursell (R., Mich.) has not been on anyone's short list for a House leadership position. Yet Vander Jagt, running for re-election as chairman of the NRCC in the leadership elections that take place December 3, and Pursell, who has just recently announced his candidacy for chairman of

Mr. Fowler is a reporter in NR's *Washington bureau.*

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the Republican Conference, have two things in common: they both have a chance of winning, and they are both moderates who have picked up a surprising amount of conservative support.

Why this change of fortunes? Both men have John Sununu to thank. By his heavy-handed attempts to quash conservatives' objections to the budget deal, he has turned Vander Jagt and Pursell into the enemies of their enemy.

As has been reported in these pages, Vander Jagt enraged the White House by supporting his NRCC co-chairman, Ed Rollins, when the latter urged Republican candidates to stick to their tax pledge even though it meant distancing themselves from their President. Then Don Sundquist of Tennessee challenged Vander Jagt for the leadership post. The rumor quickly got around that Sundquist had been persuaded to make the challenge by John Sununu.

Sundquist's campaign manager, the solidly conservative Representative Bob Livingston (La.), vehemently denies that the bid has any White House ties; he claims that mismanagement during Vander Jagt's tenure is grounds enough for a challenge. To back up this story he has released a letter to Vander Jagt asking for detailed answers to 16 questions dealing with the NRCC's financial operations. The fallout from that pre-emptive strike could drift either way. Vander Jagt supporters could quietly slip away if they believe that a major scandal is brewing. But by airing the GOP's dirty laundry, Livingston may be strengthening the conservative backlash.

Sununu did not attack Pursell directly, as he did Vander Jagt, but the same dynamic is at work in his case. Pursell's quick rise in conservatives' estimation (both Newt Gingrich and Vin Weber are backing him for the leadership post) began in October, when Sununu came to a House GOP Conference meeting to threaten White House reprisals against those who failed to vote for the budget package. It was the usually low-key Pursell who grabbed the microphone and blasted the chief of staff for his thuggery. That earned him cheers from his colleagues, as did his follow-up: co-authoring an alternative budget which most House Republicans backed.

The man Pursell is trying to unseat is Jerry Lewis (R., Calif.). Lewis has some obvious advantages—incumbency, foremost, plus his representation of his home state on the GOP Committee on Committees, which determines which GOP representatives get what committee assignments. But he also has his problems. Because he went along with the White House on the budget deal he is tarred with the same brush as Sundquist.

Meanwhile, over in the Senate, the GOP leadership elections last month saw a conservative sweep of the four contested posts (see "Senate Intramurals," Sept. 3). The significance of this rebellion was somewhat clouded because there was no challenge to the top two GOP leaders, Minority Leader Bob Dole and Minority Whip Alan Simpson (just as Minority Leader Bob Michel went unchallenged in the House). But the race for chairman of the Republican Conference saw outspoken liberal John Chafee (R.I.) edged out, 22 to 21, by moderate-to-conservative Thad Cochran (Miss.). Bob Kasten (Wisc.), a leading tax-cutter, defeated the more moderate Kit Bond (Mo.) for Conference Secretary, 26 to 17. The one disappointment was the victory by Phil Gramm (Tex.)—the former conservative hero turned budget summiteer—over Mitch McConnell (Ky.), also 26 to 17.

But the day's most dramatic battle came over the ideologically sensitive Policy Committee chairmanship, where the bright and affable conservative hard-liner Don Nickles (Okla.) was pitted against the moderate Pete Domenici (N.M.), the ranking Republican on the Budget Committee and a defender of deficit reduction through tax hikes. The first ballot produced a 21 to 21 tie, with one abstention. But the second round saw Nickles the winner, 23 to 20.

While the bulk of power remains with Dole and Simpson, the conservative capture of all lower-level posts and the purging of Chafee's liberal voice shifts the leadership markedly rightward. But that is only the first step. "Conservatives can't complain any more," says a key congressional leadership aide, "that they don't have any say at White House meetings. They now have the opportunity, and the responsibility, to speak up and object when necessary."

Already there have been some shots across the Administration's bows. In his first post-election comment, Nickles promised: "You're going to see a Republican Party that is unified against tax increases." Messrs. Dole, Michel, and Simpson have to be watching these political winds with alarm. If this ruling troika doesn't catch up with its troops, it may find the 102nd Congress proving very long indeed. □

One Long Political Party

WILLIAM McGURN

GUATEMALA CITY

ON A CLEAR evening outside the Hotel El Dorado, hundreds of people, mostly young, dance and sing to the Latin beats blasting from a dozen mega-speakers clustered around the market square. A girl in a UCLA sweatshirt sits atop her boyfriend's shoulders for a better view. Suddenly, she points to a small commotion in the back and shouts, "There he is!" This is election night here, and the "he" is Alvaro Arzu, presidential candidate for the National Advancement Party. Arzu squeezes his way up to the microphone to thunderous cheers.

And these are the *losers*. In something of an upset, Arzu came in a distant third behind Jorge Carpio of the National Center Union and Jorge Serrano of the Solidarity Action Movement, and is thus excluded from the run-off election between the top two contenders. When one of these two men is sworn in on January 13, it will mark the first transfer of power from one civilian government in Guatemala to another in more than 35 years. Not bad for a nation that probably would have gone under had America not elected Ronald Reagan in 1980.

Guatemala was the original Banana Republic, and indeed one or two of the 12 presidential candidates have al-

Mr. McGurn is NR's Washington bureau chief.

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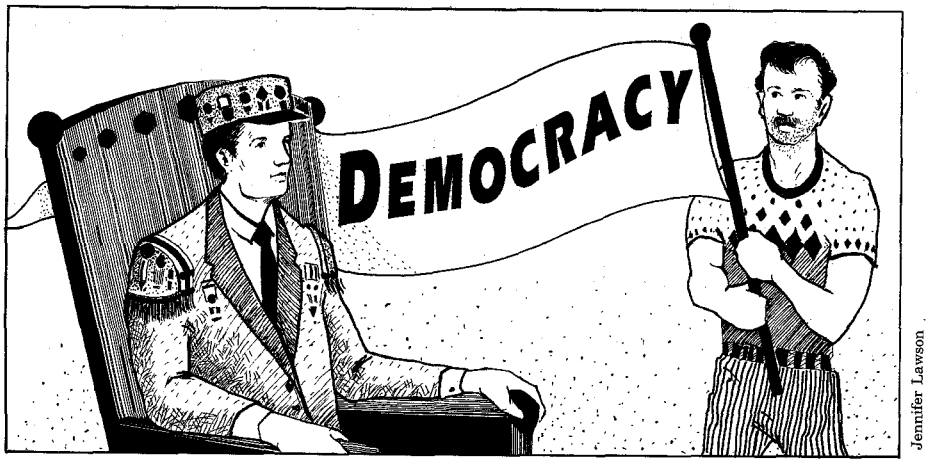

Jennifer Lawson

most as much gold braid on their caps as the Hilton doorman. But time has taken off some of the rougher edges, and although there are still enough disappearances and kidnappings to keep Amnesty International in high dudgeon, the majority now appear to be driven by good, old-fashioned motives like greed and revenge rather than politics or ideology. At one briefing we learn that, in Guatemala's relatively open economy, taxes account for only 8 per cent of gross domestic product (compared to about 28 per cent for the U.S.). The news is greeted by my friend Jacob Weisberg of *The New Republic* and like-minded companions with knowing frowns, as though they'd heard that Guatemala had yet to stamp out smallpox.

We are all here as part of a team of international electoral observers sponsored by FUNDESA, a group of new-generation Guatemalan businessmen who themselves represent the nation's transition from a land once dominated by sugar and coffee plantations into one where new industries and new markets—everything from shrimps and garlic to snow peas and chemical products—stand to overtake the traditional economy in a year or so. I confess I was at first reluctant to come. The idea of monitoring elections in Central America conjured up grim images of Jimmy Carter and Father Hesburgh and interminable homilies on land reform.

In fact it turned out to be scads of fun, a Club Med for Beltway types. "Work" was one continuous party, an unending series of interviews and receptions, including a briefing at the U.S. Embassy, where human-affairs officer Lewis Amselem told us how pro-American the Guatemalan people are (judging from the grilling that followed, this is something that distinguishes Guatemalans from the majority of the international-observer team). The evening before, even the wife of the leading leftist candidate, Carmén Escribando de León, told us that the army today is the "guarantor of the democratic process," but most of those at the briefing want to hear only about army abuses. As in the Amnesty reports, where death squads are right-wing by definition, the estimated 1,100 to 1,500 Communist guerrillas get scant attention from us *gringos*.

On Sunday, the day of the elections, my group left the hotel at 7 A.M. for Chimaltenango, an Indian area in the highlands an hour's drive outside the capital. In addition to two other American monitors in our car—one a staffer for Senator Dave Durenberger (R., Minn.) and the other the head of College Republicans—we had four delightful assistants from Youth for Guatemala. As we barreled down the Pan American Highway, rap music blared from the radio. "If you keep importing this stuff," I told them, "you're going to stay a Third World nation."

At the first polling site we visited, large numbers of men in panama hats and flannel shirts were lined up to vote; there were almost no women. One of our guides explained that in many of these Indian families the men would not let their wives vote. There, as everywhere else we went, the mood was casual and easy-going. Some of the party representatives we talked with accused the competition of buying votes, but none of our group saw any evidence of this. Later on, at a little village called Balanya, representatives of the three top parties complained that they had been locked out of the initial counting of the blank ballots at 6 A.M., and a Mr. Mario Batzín claimed that a Mr. Freddy Alberto Salazar Barrios had told him to keep his mouth shut or he'd toss him in the poky for a spell. I listened attentively, took copious notes, and discharged my solemn obligations to the democratic process by finking on them all when we got back to Guatemala City.

But the interesting questions of this election had nothing to do with intimidation or vote-buying. They had to do with the exclusion of General José Efraín Ríos Montt, an Evangelical Protestant who reigned over this land after a successful coup in March 1982 and was given to delivering Sunday sermons on TV. During his 16-month rule the general moved decisively against the guerrillas (he once said his was not a "scorched-earth" but a "scorched-Communist policy"), under a slogan loosely translated as "beans and bullets." The gist of this was arming the people and guaranteeing their food supplies, something they haven't forgotten. A Catholic priest here named Father Hugo confirmed to me that Ríos Montt would get all the votes in his mainly Indian parish, though he himself couldn't stand the man. I asked one voter why Ríos Montt is so popular. "He gave us our dignity," said the man, a poor *ladino* —mixed Indian and Spanish blood— who drives a vegetable truck.

Nonetheless, the Supreme Court disqualified the general's petition to stand for office. At breakfast the day after the results came in, he was pretty vague about everything except taxes (he would cut them), and implied that the solution to all Guatemala's woes was simply a matter of putting a few good Christians in office. In my mind the Supreme Court did the right thing by excluding him. But it did strike me that many of the people on our trip who found General Ríos Montt so appalling thought Daniel Ortega a splendid candidate in Nicaragua.

Indeed, the only real clashes we saw in Guatemala occurred among the observers themselves. A number of the pests wanted to detail every minor report of irregularities in our statement, which then naturally would be highlighted by the press, so that by the time it came out in the *New York Times* the headline would have been: "Guatemalans Go to the Polls; Elections Marred by Fraud, Vote-Buying." But Representative Bob Livingston (R., La.), unofficial chairman of our group and veteran of elections in Pan-

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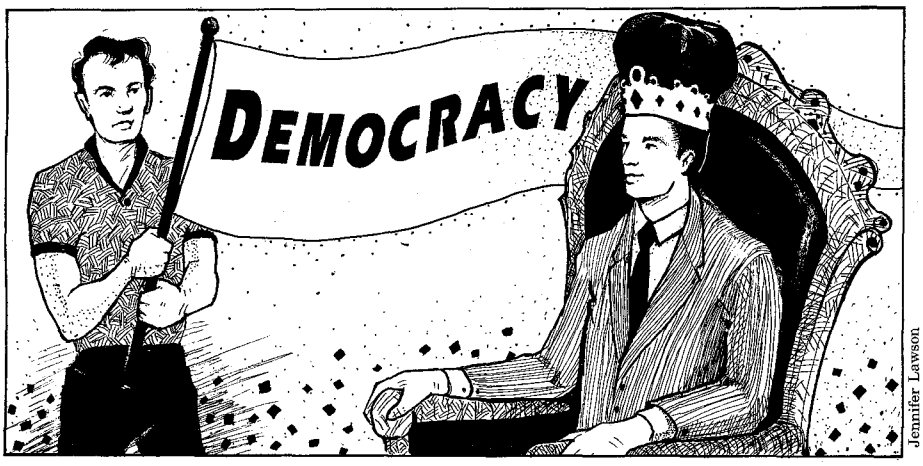
ama, El Salvador, and the Philippines, put the big kibosh on those efforts during the meeting of observers, and at the press conference that followed he noted that the just-ended elections were as fair as any in his home state of Louisiana.

That much was obvious to most of us, but the old faith dies hard, and there are those determined not to let it go. While awaiting our flight home, one member of our group who had scowled through most of the trip was asked what he thought about what he'd seen. "Well, procedurally they were fair," he said, "but I have to get back to Washington to see what I think." □

The Fog Is Lifting

ERIK v. KUEHNELT-LEDDIHN



Jennifer Lawson

INNSBRUCK

THE MORE the fog lifts over Eastern Europe, the clearer the view becomes of the forest of question marks there. Our friends in the Western Hemisphere tend to believe that we have seen the last act of the drama that began in September 1939. In this view Adam Smith has finally defeated Karl Marx; by adopting a package of liberal multi-party democracy, freedom of speech, welfarism, and free trade, Eastern Europe will soon find itself on easy street.

From over here on the Continent, however, it appears that we are returning, more or less, to the order of 1919; the intellectual crisis that started more than seventy years ago is manifesting itself once more.

Recent revelations from the formerly Marxist states give the impression of a strong sense of penitence and the wish to draw a final line under the horrors of the long night under the two socialisms—national and international. The Soviets have admitted not only the butchery at Katyn Forest, but also the existence of three more camps with over 15,000 victims; the Bulgar Communists have shown their mass graves to the press, as did the East Germans; and in Slovenia a solemn Mass was celebrated at Kocevski Rog, where countless anti-Communists, handed over to Tito by the British, were mercilessly slaughtered.

Yet it would be extremely naïve to believe that the great failure of the socialist experiment will strike a mortal blow at socialism in all of Europe. The simpler and sillier a political creed, the greater its success. Socialism can be explained to an intelligent sixth-grader in about 15 minutes, whereas grasping the theories of Adam Smith or the Austrian school of economics requires both intelligence *and* prior knowledge.

Of course, the political landscape varies greatly from East–Central Europe to East Germany to Western Europe. The revulsion against not just Communism, but even socialism, in East–Central Europe is very strong. Eastern Europeans, skeptical and sophisticated people, have always been leery of too much order and discipline. In these countries many "Communists," whether they were aware of it or not, were really anarchists. (In Russian political demonstrations nowadays, one sees the black flag of the anarchists as well as the double eagle of the monarchists.)

East Germany's situation is entirely different. The percentage of people there with a collectivist political outlook is staggering. As opposed to the rejoicing in East–Central Europe, in East Germany one frequently hears a lament for the end of the Red regime that runs something like this: "Communism was a grand ideal, but it was traduced by the Stalinists. We were honest, devoted, ready for any sacrifice, but we were constantly lied to. In what should we now believe? What is the alternative?"

Here it must be said in all candor that "capitalism" lacks the idealistic flavor of socialism, which, moreover, promises security, protection, and shelter, whereas the adventure of free enterprise entails uncertainty and, for the unavoidable period of transition, a great deal of unemployment. People have suffered under the Red yoke, but they are not all ready for real freedom. In a country like the German "Democratic Republic" they have been poisoned to a remarkable degree.

Christa Wolf—perhaps East Germany's most important writer—has recently published a small book, *Was Bleibt* (*What Remains*). Between the lines one perceives the desperate tergiversations of a woman who was regarded as suspect by the authorities in East Berlin, who was well received as a near-dissident in West Germany (which she criticized heavily), but who never had the "courage" to make the final break. (I put "courage" in quotes because she did not, and probably still does not, have an alternative.) One reviewer called this book "the lamentations of a hypocrite for hypocrites." But only a minority understands that Marx leads logically to Lenin, and Lenin to Stalin. (The fact that Marx was a proto-Nazi racist who saw the Jews as relatives of the "niggers" and the Slavs as barbarians is known merely to a scholarly few.)

Most of the liberated ex-Communist countries are heading for a liberal, multi-party, free-market democracy that will render them successful economically, but the graver problem of finding a truly satisfactory political framework remains—not only for them, but also for nearly all the rest of

(Continues on page 60)

A new edition of Mr. Kuehnelt-Leddihn's Leftism *will be published this winter.*

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1790–1990

A VINDICATION OF EDMUND BURKE

The Communist Revolution has been the most ambitious attempt in history to remake human society 'upon a theory.' Edmund Burke correctly diagnosed the first such attempt, and in the process gave useful advice to those now rebuilding after the second.

CONOR CRUISE O'BRIEN

I. Truth and Consequences

ON NOVEMBER 1, 1790, Edmund Burke's most famous book, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, was published. It is important to get the title right. The book is often referred to as *Reflections on the French Revolution*. The book's real title adequately reveals Burke's intentions. Burke's point, in wording the title as he did, was that this was not just a "French Revolution" but a general revolution begun in France but likely to spread to other countries, as indeed it began to do, through military expansion, less than two years after the publication of the *Reflections*.

But already well before the period of military expansion, and before Burke began to write his *Reflections*, the revolution that began in France was beginning to expand in another way. This was an expansion through the movement of ideas, and through the strong sympathy, admiration, and spirit of emulation which various revolutionary transactions and declarations in France had aroused in certain circles in other countries, including Britain, by the end of 1789. Burke's *Reflections* was written with the deliberate aim of sounding the alarm against this form of revolutionary expansion. The *Reflections* resembles George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* in two important ways. Both books were written about a revolution in another country and its consequences, and both were directed against British sympathizers with that revolution, and intended to isolate them.

Philosophically, the origins of Burke's opposition to French Revolutionary ideas go back a long way: to his first book, *A Vindication of Natural Society*, published in 1756—34 years before the publication of the *Reflections*.

A Vindication was a prophetic work. In it, Burke set out to show—in an ironic mode—that an attempt to substitute "natural religion" for revealed religion would have revolutionary consequences for civil society. Burke's immediate target was Henry Bolingbroke, an English Voltairean of the early eighteenth century and a spiritual ancestor of the English sympathizers with the French Revolution, who are Burke's targets in the *Reflections*. There is an impressive continuity of thought and perception between these two books, separated as they are by more than thirty eventful years. It is a continuity that refutes the superficial contention of so many of Burke's detractors that he "changed his principles" over the French Revolution. He didn't change his principles. He held to them with fierce tenacity in the *Reflections*, and in the rest of his writings and speeches against the French Revolution.

A Vindication of Natural Society, that remote predecessor, or ancestor, of the *Reflections*, is not a treatise against the Enlightenment as a whole. Burke was himself a child of the Enlightenment: a child, that is, of the early, English or English-inspired, phase of the Enlightenment. This was the Enlightenment of Locke and Montesquieu, an Enlightenment that was compatible with a tolerant version of Christianity. This was

Mr. O'Brien has almost completed a major study of Edmund Burke, which is to be published in London by Christopher Sinclair-Stevenson, under the title, The Great Melody: A Thematic Biography of Edmund Burke. *American publication has still to be arranged.*

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Burke's Enlightenment. But from the second quarter of the eighteenth century on, a different strain of Enlightenment emerged, and became dominant in France by the mid 1760s. This was the Voltairean Enlightenment, radically hostile to all forms of revealed religion, and contemptuously rejecting the entire Judaeo–Christian heritage. Burke, who was a deeply religious man—although there is some doubt about what his religion actually was—attacked the anti-religious strain of the Enlightenment with *A Vindication*, just as with the *Reflections* he would attack what he saw as the results of that strain in the French Revolution.

AS BURKE had foreseen (in general terms) in *A Vindication*, the discrediting of religion had the effect of condemning the established social and political system in that country where the discredit of religion was pushed to the greatest lengths. That country was France. The discredit of religion automatically discredited the monarchy, since reverence for the monarch—His Most Christian Majesty—rested essentially on the theory that the monarch was God's anointed. If there was no God—at least no God Who personally intervened in human politics—then the monarchy was a fraud. The monarch was delegitimized by being desacralized, and the way was laid open for his deposition and execution. Edmund Burke opposed that whole process, or project, from near its beginning, with *A Vindication*, to near its end, with the *Reflections*.

Philosophically, then, the *Reflections* has deep roots in Burke's thought. Politically it is also in strict accordance with a principle that he had laid down as early as December 1783, explaining his initial—and protracted—unwillingness to attack the system of government of the East India Company. Burke, in that context, explained his "insuperable reluctance to destroy any established system of government, upon a theory." That reluctance is at the root of the *Reflections*, politically speaking. And Burke had given expression to that reluctance nearly six years before the Revolution in France began. Those who seek to cast doubt on Burke's sincerity and consistency over the French Revolution have a very poor case.

Burke had had serious qualms about the Revolution from the very beginning. His earliest known thoughts about it are contained in a letter to Lord Charlemont, dated August 9, 1789:

> Our thoughts of everything at home are suspended by our astonishment at the wonderful Spectacle which is exhibited in a Neighbouring and rival Country—what Spectators and what actors. England gazing with astonishment at a French struggle for Liberty and not knowing whether to blame or to applaud! The thing indeed, though I thought I saw something like it in progress for several years, has still something in it paradoxical and Mysterious. The spirit it is impossible not to admire; but the old Parisian ferocity has broken out in a shocking manner. It is true this may be no more than a sudden explosion . . . But if it should be character rather than accident, then that people are not fit for Liberty, and must have a Strong hand like that of their former masters to coerce them.

Burke did not, at any time, approve of the French Revolution, but he did not, during 1789, experience any need to combat it. Burke's decision that he must sound the alarm against the English sympathizers with the Revolution in France was reached in the third week of January 1790, when he read a pamphlet containing the proceedings of the Revolution Society on November 4 of the previous year. The Revolution Society was an old established body, consisting mainly of Dissenters, which existed to commemorate the English Revolution of 1688. The Society met annually on November 4, that being the birthday of William III. The 1789 meeting was the first since the fall of the Bastille, and the participants used the occasion to celebrate and extol the French Revolution. The proceedings consisted of a sermon by a well-known Dissenting minister, the Reverend Richard Price; a resolution carried by the Society; a dinner at the London Tavern; and an address to the National Assembly. In the *Reflections*, the part of the proceedings which Burke concentrates on is the Price sermon. But it was the pamphlet as a whole that inflamed Burke and set him to composing the *Reflections*. The pamphlet firmly placed the British welcome for the French Revolution in a context of anti-Popery. The resolution carried by the Revolution Society at the London Tavern on the evening following Price's sermon ran as follows:

Elisabeth Vigée-Lebrun

The Queen of France, Marie-Antoinette

> This Society, sensible of the important advantages arising to this Country by its deliverance from Popery and Arbitrary Power, and conscious that, under God, we owe that

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signal blessing to the Revolution, which seated our Deliverer, King William the Third, on the Throne; do hereby declare our firm attachment to the civil and religious principles which were recognised and established by that glorious event and which have preserved the succession in the Protestant line; and our determined resolution to maintain and, to the utmost of our power, to perpetuate those blessings to the latest posterity.

On the same occasion, Price moved the Congratulatory Address to the National Assembly in Paris, which was duly carried, conveyed to the Assembly, and warmly welcomed there.

Thus, a society set up to celebrate the Revolution of 1688 was emphasizing the anti-Catholic character of that Revolution, while welcoming the French Revolution, which had already assumed an anti-Catholic character, notably through the annexation of Church property (November 1789).

THIS COMBINATION hurt Burke deeply, for it hit him along a fault-line in his political personality. Politically, Burke was a Whig, and thus *ex officio* committed to the principles of the Glorious Revolution of 1688. But he was disqualified from sharing the feelings of normal English Whigs toward that Revolution. Burke needed to play down its anti-Catholic elements, and when the Revolution Society played them up, Burke suffered, and needed to strike back.

Burke's mother was, and remained all her life, a practicing Catholic, as were her people, the Nagles, a family of Catholic gentry in the Blackwater Valley, County Cork. Burke spent six years of his childhood among the Nagles, and he shared their feelings about the anti-Catholic Penal Code, which unfavorably governed so many aspects of their lives.

Edmund Burke's father, Richard Burke, was, at least outwardly, a member of the Established Church of Ireland, of which Edmund was brought up as a member. But Richard Burke, too, may have been a victim of the Penal Laws, though in a more insidious way. I have reason to believe that Richard had been a Catholic, but conformed to the Established Church in order to safeguard his career as an attorney.

Burke's problem with the Glorious Revolution was that he was committed to its general principles, which had brought great benefits to Britain, but that he detested that Revolution's most conspicuous and oppressive monument in Ireland, the Penal Code.

In his political career, Burke dealt with this problem by seeking to extend the benefits of the Glorious Revolution—the civil and religious liberty that it promised—to Roman Catholics, in Britain and in Ireland. In this effort, Burke had been assisted by the more liberal Zeitgeist of the late eighteenth century—the progress of the Enlightenment. Aided by this tendency, Burke had succeeded in masterminding the first measure of Catholic Emancipation—the Catholic Relief Act of 1778. He had paid for that, by losing his parliamentary seat for Bristol in the general election of 1780, as a result of the anti-Catholic reaction which followed that Act and found its most dramatic expression in the Gordon Riots of the summer of that year, in which Lord George Gordon publicly blamed Burke for the measure of relief against which the rioters were protesting.

We can see, therefore, why the proceedings of the English Revolution Society of November 4, 1789, were so repugnant to Edmund Burke. But let me not be misunderstood here. The anti-Catholic elements in the English welcome for the French Revolution do *not* constitute "the reason why" Burke was against that Revolution. Burke was against it, on rational grounds, from the beginning, because of his objection to radical social innovations made on grounds of theory. What the proceedings of the Revolution Society accomplished was to enlist Burke's emotions, in addition to his reasoning power, against the French Revolution. The *Reflections* is the fruit of that alliance.

Adaptation by Mary Anne Erickson

A version of Robespierre, from the cover of NATIONAL REVIEW, *July 14, 1989.*

Burke, while already at work on what would become the *Reflections*, was headed toward a break with his old friend, now the leader of his party, Charles James Fox. This became apparent in a debate in the House of Commons, on the Army Estimates Bill, on February 9, 1790. Fox had spoken with enthusiasm of various revolutionary developments in France. Burke fired a warning shot:

> The House must perceive from my coming forward to mark an expression or two of my best friend, how anxious I am to keep the distemper of France from the least countenance in England . . . I am so strongly opposed to any the least tendency towards the means of introducing a democracy like theirs . . . that much as it would afflict me, if such a thing could be attempted, and that any friend of mine could concur in such measures (I am far, very far, from believing they could) I would abandon my best friends and join with my worst enemies to oppose either the means or the end, and

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to resist all violent exertions of the spirit of innovation, so distinct from all principles of true and safe reformation: a spirit well calculated to overturn States, but perfectly unfit to amend them.

Fox rose to reply, according to the *Parliamentary History*, "with a concern of mind which it was impossible to describe." He acknowledged his deep intellectual indebtedness to Burke, and explicitly disavowed any attempt "to introduce any dangerous element into our excellent Constitution." Burke immediately and gracefully accepted the *amende honorable*, but the parliamentary episode did not end there. Richard Brinsley Sheridan, then the most prominent member of the Whigs after Burke and Fox, marred the reconciliation scene by declaring that he "differed decidedly from Burke" in "almost every word that he had uttered respecting the French Revolution." Burke curtly replied that "henceforward" Sheridan and he "are separated in politics."

The rift between the leading Whigs did not force itself on the attention of Parliament again until April–May of 1791. In the meantime (November), the *Reflections* had been published, widening the rift. This was a quiet period in the history of the Revolution in France, and to most Whigs, Burke and his book appeared extravagantly alarmist. Fox, under Sheridan's influence, was becoming extravagant on the other side.

On April 15, Fox declared, in the course of a parliamentary debate, that the new French Constitution was "the most stupendous and glorious edifice of liberty which had been erected on the foundation of human liberty in any place or country." According to the *Parliamentary History*, "as soon as Mr. Fox sat down, Mr. Burke rose, mid visible emotion," but was shouted down by the Whigs. He did not get a chance of taking the matter up until April 21, which saw a sort of preliminary round between Fox and Burke, each man indicating that he was not prepared to back away.

On May 6, the storm broke. Burke began with a long speech in the spirit of the *Reflections*. He ended with a direct attack upon the French Constitution which Fox so venerated: "I regard the French Constitution, not with approbation but with horror, as involving every principle to be detested, and pregnant with every consequence to be dreaded and abominated."

Fox replied with heavy sarcasm, certain to raise the temperature. When Burke rose again, his speech was interrupted by frequent calls for order coming from his own benches. Burke took these calls to be organized by Fox. He was probably mistaken in that—though Fox could have discouraged these demonstrations had he wished to do so. However that may be, it was Burke's belief that Fox was encouraging the chorus of his former friends against him that led to the final break: "An attempt is being made by one who was formerly my friend to bring down upon me the censure of the House. In the course of our long acquaintance, no one difference of opinion has ever before for a single moment interrupted our friendship." Fox is here recorded as whispering: "There was no loss of friends."

Burke: "Yes, there is a loss of friends. I know the price of my conduct. I have done my duty at the price of my friend. Our friendship is at an end." At this point, the *Parliamentary History* goes on:

> Mr. Fox rose to reply: but his mind was so much agitated, and his heart so much affected by what had fallen from Mr. Burke, that it was some minutes before he could proceed. Tears trickled down his cheeks, and he strove in vain to give utterance to feelings that dignified and exalted his nature. The sensibility of every member of the House appeared uncommonly exalted upon that occasion.

The opening part of Fox's speech to which this was the prelude was kind and respectful to Burke, and it seemed for a moment as if the reconciliation of February 1790 might be repeated. But then Fox bethought himself of the *Reflections*, and opened his mind on that subject: "As soon as that book was published, I condemned it, both in public and in private, and every one of the doctrines which it contained."

That tore it.

Edmund Burke could not possibly remain a member of a party whose leader, in Burke's presence and on the floor of the House of Commons, had totally condemned all the doctrines contained in *Reflections on the Revolution in France*.

Burke replied coldly—referring to "pretenses of friendship"—and the quarrel between Burke and Fox became irreparable.

As it happened, the break with Burke came at a bad time for the Whigs. In the month following the quarrel between Burke and Fox, Louis XVI and Marie-Antoinette attempted their flight to Varennes and were brought back to Paris as prisoners. The French Revolution accelerated until it vindicated—fully by 1792–93—what had been regarded as the alarmist picture which Burke had painted in the *Reflections*. The Whigs, who had rejected the author of the *Reflections*, had cut themselves off from British public opinion because of their enthusiasm for the Revolution in France.

II. Insight Amounting to Prophecy

I HAVE considered, so far, the genesis of the *Reflections* and its immediate consequences in British politics. I shall now consider the content of the work itself.

The book began as a letter, addressed to "a very young gentleman" in Paris, who had asked Burke for reassurance regarding the future course of the French Revolution. Burke's original reply, forwarded by him to Paris toward the end of 1789, explains, calmly and courteously, why he cannot provide the desired reassurance. Burke tells his French correspondent: "You may have subverted Monarchy, but not recover'd freedom . . . You are now to live in a new order of things; under a plan of Government of which no Man can speak from experience . . . The French may be yet to go through more transmigrations."

Those three sentences are developed at length in the

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Reflections, which is also still, in form, a letter to the same correspondent. But the *Reflections* is in other respects very different, in character and tone, from the original letter. In the interim, from mid January 1790 on, Burke had learned of those "proceedings of certain societies" in London, in which unrestricted admiration for the French Revolution was expressed and a desire to emulate it in England was implied.

Burke felt great alarm and anger at those proceedings, and having denounced them, from his place in the House of Commons, in February 1790 he set out to write a tract to warn the British public against the dangers of any such tendencies. That tract, in the form of a letter, is the *Reflections*.

Burke's passionate indignation against the French Revolution—and above all against any attempt to imitate it in the British Isles—is evident in the *Reflections*, sustains it, and is the source of a part of its power. But a part only. The text of the *Reflections* takes up nearly three hundred pages. I reckon that 90 per cent of that consists of argument and analysis. There is an emotional undercurrent throughout, but it breaks through to the surface only rarely. When it does the resultant rhetoric is spectacular. The most spectacular—that about the Queen of France, as Burke saw her in 1773—has been quoted far more often than anything else in the book. Repetition of this quotation has created the misleading impression that the *Reflections* is mostly gorgeous rhetoric. In reality, most of the book is made up of plain and cogent argument. Passion is present, but Burke keeps it well under control, except on the rare occasions when he decides not to do so.

> In the spring and summer of 1790, most people seem to have assumed that the French Revolution had already taken place. Burke sensed that the Revolution was only beginning.

The grand distinguishing feature of the *Reflections* is the power of Burke's insight into the character of the French Revolution, then at an early stage. This insight is so acute as to endow him with prophetic power. He sees what way the Revolution is heading. No one else seems to have done so at the time. The spring and summer of 1790—the period in which Burke wrote the *Reflections*—was the most tranquil stage, in appearance, in the history of the Revolution. It was a period of constitution-making, of benevolent rhetoric, and of peaceful jubilation, as in the *Déclaration de Paix au Monde* on May 21, 1790, or the *Fête de la Fédération* on July 14, 1790, celebrating the first anniversary of the fall of the Bastille.

Contemplating that attractive scene, in the spring and summer of 1790, most people seem to have assumed that the French Revolution *had already taken place*, and that all that remained was to reap its benign consequences. Burke sensed that the Revolution was only beginning. In the penultimate paragraph of the *Reflections*, Burke warned that the French "commonwealth" could hardly remain in the form it had taken in 1790: "But before its final settlement it may be obliged to pass, as one of our poets says, 'through great varieties of untried being,' and in all its transmigrations to be purified by fire and blood."

Reading the *Reflections* with an undergraduate class in New York in the 1960s, I found that my students assumed that the direst events of the Revolution—the September Massacres, the Terror, the executions of the King and Queen—had already taken place when the *Reflections* was written. In reality, those events all lay in the future. And yet there is a sense in which those events are already present in the *Reflections*. They are present in the sense that the ferocious dynamic which Burke ascribes to the Revolution, even in 1790, became visible to the world through those events of 1792–94.

Burke foresaw not merely "transmigrations, fire, and blood." In a remarkable passage—on page 342 of the Penguin Classics edition—Burke foresaw how those transmigrations would end up, in military despotism:

> It is known, that armies have hitherto yielded a very precarious and uncertain obedience to any senate, or popular authority; and they will least of all yield it to an assembly which is to have only a continuance of two years. The officers must totally lose the characteristic disposition of military men, if they see with perfect submission and due admiration, the dominion of pleaders; especially when they find, that they have a new court to pay to an endless succession of those pleaders, whose military policy, and the genius of whose command (if they should have any) must be as uncertain as their duration is transient. In the weakness of one kind of authority, and in the fluctuation of all, the officers of an army will remain for some time mutinous and full of faction, until some popular general, who understands the art of conciliating the soldiery, and who possesses the true spirit of command, shall draw the eyes of all men upon himself. Armies will obey him on his personal account. There is no other way of securing military obedience in this state of things. But the moment in which that event shall happen, the person who really commands the army is your master; the master (that is little) of your king, the master of your assembly, the master of your whole republic.

The seizure of power by Napoleon Bonaparte—the event predicted in this remarkable passage—occurred on 18 *brumaire* 1799, nine years after the publication of the *Reflections*, and more than two years after the death of the author.

Burke's astonishing capacity to see into the ways in which events were moving derived, not from any mystical intuition, but from penetrating powers of observation, judicious inference from what was observed, and thorough analysis of what was discerned by observation and inference. Burke had immense respect for *circumstances*, and observed them with proportionate atten-

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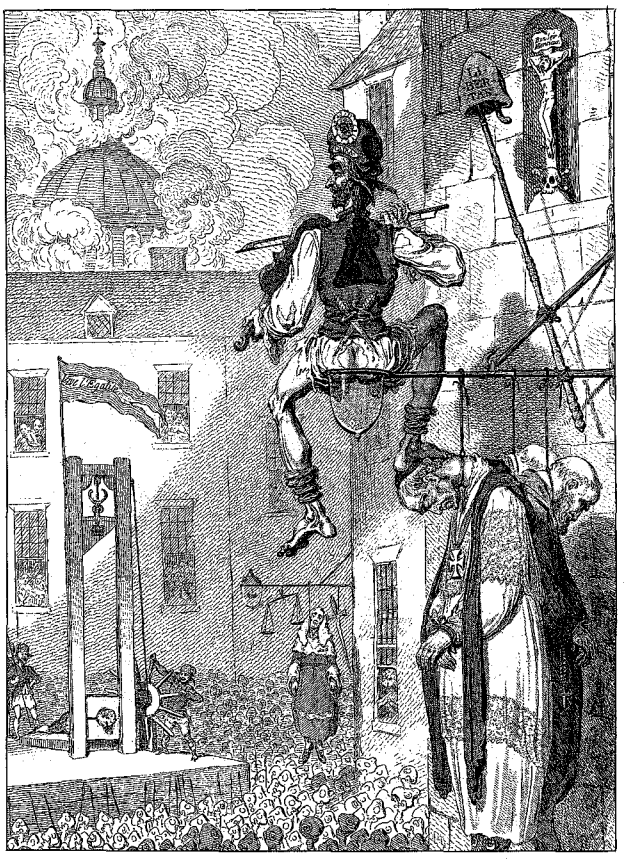
tiveness. There is a passage about circumstances in relation to liberty which occurs very near the beginning of the *Reflections* (pages 89–91 in the Penguin Classics edition), and is fundamental to Burke's political thinking, not alone in the *Reflections*, but generally. In this passage Burke is referring to the congratulations conveyed by the English Revolution Society to the French National Assembly, in November 1789, on France's achievement of liberty. The passage runs:

> I flatter myself that I love a manly, moral, regulated liberty as well as any gentleman of the Revolution Society; be he who he will; and perhaps I have given as good proofs of my attachment to that cause, in the whole course of my public conduct. I think I envy liberty as little as they do, to any other nation. But I cannot stand forward, and give praise or blame to any thing which relates to human actions, and human concerns, on a simple view of the object, as it stands, stripped of every relation, in all the nakedness and solitude of metaphysical abstraction. Circumstances (which with some gentlemen pass for nothing) give in reality to every political principle its distinguishing colour, and discriminating effect. The circumstances are what render every civil and political scheme beneficial or noxious to mankind. Abstractedly speaking, government, as well as liberty, is good; yet could I, in common sense, ten years ago, have felicitated France on her enjoyment of a government (for she then had a government) without enquiry what the nature of that government was, or how it was administered? Can I now congratulate the same nation upon its freedom? Is it because liberty, in the abstract may be classed amongst the blessings of mankind, that I am seriously to felicitate a madman, who has escaped from the protecting restraint and wholesome darkness of his cell, on his restoration to the enjoyment of light and liberty? Am I to congratulate an highwayman and murderer, who has broke prison, upon the recovery of his natural rights? This would be to act over again the scene of the criminals condemned to the gallies, and their heroic deliverer, the metaphysic Knight of the Sorrowful Countenance.
>
> When I see the spirit of liberty in action, I see a strong principle at work; and this, for a while, is all I can possibly know of it. The wild gas, the fixed air is plainly broke loose: but we ought to suspend our judgment until the first effervescence is a little subsided, till the liquor is cleared, and until we see something deeper than the agitation of a troubled and frothy surface. I must be tolerably sure, before I venture publicly to congratulate men upon a blessing, that they have really received one. Flattery corrupts both the receiver and the giver; and adulation is not of more service to the people than to kings. I should therefore suspend my congratulations on the new liberty of France, until I was informed how it had been combined with government; with public force; with the discipline and obedience of armies; with the collection of an effective and well-distributed revenue; with morality and religion; with the solidity of property; with peace and order; with civil and social manners. All these (in their way) are good things too; and, without them, liberty is not a benefit whilst it lasts, and is not likely to continue long. The effect of liberty to individuals is, that they may do what they please: We ought to see what it will please them to do, before we risque congratulations, which may be soon turned into complaints. Prudence would dictate this in the case of separate insulated private men; but liberty, when men act in bodies, is power. Considerate people, before they declare themselves, will observe the use which is made of power; and particularly of so trying a thing as new power in new persons, of whose principles, tempers, and dispositions, they have little or no experience, and in situations where those who appear the most stirring in the scene may possibly not be the real movers.



James Gillray, 1793

Original title: "The Zenith of French Glory: The Pinnacle of Liberty." Depicting the execution of Louis XVI on January 21, 1793.

III. The End of Another Revolution

I NOW consider the relation of the *Reflections* to our own time. 1990 was like 1790 in an important way. Both years were aftermaths of epochal changes. 1790 saw the first anniversary of the fall of the Bastille. 1990 saw the first anniversary of the destruction of the Berlin Wall. The 1990 anniversary was celebrated, as the 1790 anniversary was (but not by Burke), as a feast of liberation. But the two versions of liberation are diametrically opposed. In July 1790, what was being celebrated was the beginning of the Revolution in France. In November 1990, what was celebrated was the undoing of the Communist Revolution.

In July 1790, while France was celebrating the Feast of the Federation, and British friends of the French Revolution were celebrating in sympathy, Edmund Burke was at work on the great counter-revolutionary tract which was the *Reflections on the Revolution in France*. From the principles laid down in the *Reflections*, we know that Burke would have rejoiced at the destruction of the Berlin Wall and the comprehensive discredit of the Communist Revolution.

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There is a real continuity between the Revolution in France and the Revolution in Russia. That continuity is often denied—especially by French anti-Communists. Last year's bicentenary celebrations in Paris were organized around the theme of universal liberation, supposedly inspired by the 1789 Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen. As pageantry, the celebration was brilliantly successful. As history, it was nonsense. The edifying sentiments expressed in the Declaration had no influence over the conduct of the French Revolutionaries themselves, or of anybody else, anywhere. What that document influenced was *other documents*: principally, the constitutions of a number of Latin American countries, whose governments were, in practice, no more influenced by the edifying sentiments in question than the original French Revolutionaries had allowed themselves to be.

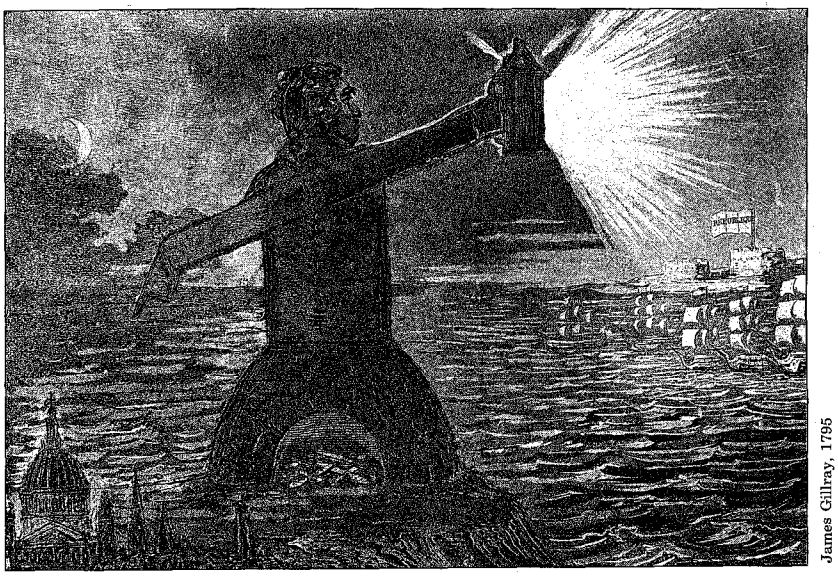
The true heirs to the French Revolution—and specifically to the Jacobin tradition—were the Communists. We can see this particularly clearly when we apply Burkean categories. What Burke most detested, and dreaded, about the French Revolutionaries was their commitment to radical social and political innovation: the transformation of an established order in accordance with theoretical prescriptions. In all that, Marx and Lenin are clearly heirs to the Jacobins. The only difference is that the commitment of the Marxists, in these respects, outdid that of the Jacobins. In every phase of the French Revolution, the Revolutionaries left private property intact, with just one great exception, bitterly denounced by Burke. That exception was the nationalization of the property of the Church, in November 1789. What the Jacobins did to Church property, the Marxists did to almost all property. The result was the command economy, whose abject failure is now acknowledged in all the European lands which were unlucky enough to have been subjected to it.

What we have been witnessing in 1989–90, in the Soviet Union and in Eastern Europe, is the bankruptcy of the greatest experiment in social and political innovation ever made. What stronger vindication could there be of the principles laid down, and the warning contained, in *Reflections on the Revolution in France*?

Modern British society is widely different from the British society that Burke knew, but there is a clear continuity between the two. The society changed, politically and socially, not through any burst of innovation, but through a series of partial reforms, as Burke hoped it would do. The heritage of the great French innovative effort was not so happy. The Revolution and its consequences left the French a deeply divided people throughout the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth. After 1917, those of the French who felt themselves to be in the tradition of their own great Revolution flocked to the French Communist Party. In the Second World War, the fact that the party of the working-class (as the French Communist Party then still was) was opposed to the war-effort—because of the Stalin–Hitler pact—was among the reasons for the fall of France.

From 1970 on, however, the Revolutionary heritage, which had bedeviled the French for so long, went into decline, as did the French Communist Party. The 1989 celebration of the bicentenary was essentially a gorgeous farewell party—a sort of wake—for a Revolution which is at last over, though it took nearly two centuries for it to die.

One of the consequences of the decline of the cult of the French Revolution in France itself has been the emergence of a new respect for Edmund Burke, and for the *Reflections* in particular, among French historians. For many years the dominant school of French historians were really the priests of a cult of the great Revolution. As long as that was the case, the author of *Reflections on the Revolution in France—ce livre infâme*, as Michelet called it—was necessarily anathema. French historians of today take quite a different view. The monumental *Critical Dictionary of the French Revolution*, edited by François Furet and Mona Ozouf and published in 1988, contains an entry on Burke by Gérard Gengembre which concludes with a tribute to his "penetrating clairvoyance, revealing the depths of what was at stake in the Revolution." There are many other references to Burke, and his name is cross-listed in at least 16 of the *Dictionary*'s entries. Last year saw the publication of a new French translation of the *Reflections*—together with a selection of Burke's other writings on the Revolution—with a weighty and profoundly respectful preface by Philippe Raynaud (who was also a contributor to the *Critical Dictionary*). Raynaud describes the author of the *Reflections* as "liberal and counter-revolutionary," which is exactly right.



Original title: "French Telegraph Making Signals in the Dark." The reference is to Charles James Fox's continued opposition to war with Revolutionary France.

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British scholarship is less respectful toward the author of the *Reflections* than French scholarship now is. At least that is the conclusion toward which one would be impelled by comparing Raynaud's edition with the corresponding English publication of the same year: Volume VIII (*The French Revolution, 1790–1794*) of *The Writings and Speeches of Edmund Burke* (Clarendon Press, Oxford); Volume VIII is edited by L. G. Mitchell. Raynaud's preface provides 105 pages of respectful interpretation and comment, ending with a tribute to Burke's "incomparable art." Mitchell gives us 51 pages of disparagement and depreciation, interspersed with a veritable anthology of sneers directed at Burke by his numerous enemies. If Mitchell is aware that Burke's writings on the Revolution have any merit, he nowhere reveals this. He thinks of Burke as a failure. His preface ends with the words: "For him there was only the bitterness of the dishonored prophet."

A quirky introduction might be excused if the edition were otherwise satisfactory. It is in fact lamentably defective. It is hard to believe, but this volume of *The Writings and Speeches of Edmund Burke* contains *no speeches at all*; only writings. Yet some of Burke's most important speeches were made on the subject—the French Revolution—with which Volume VIII is supposed to be concerned, and fall within its chronological limits: 1790–1794. The relevant speeches omitted include the series which culminated in the breach between Edmund Burke and Charles James Fox (referred to above). It seems almost inconceivable that these speeches could be omitted from the relevant volume of a scholarly series entitled *The Writings and Speeches of Edmund Burke*. The two volumes previously published in this series gave their readers what those readers were entitled to expect: the writings *and the speeches*; including—quite rightly—a number of speeches which are of little importance compared with a number of those omitted from Volume VIII. This miserable edition also omits one of Burke's major writings on the French Revolution, the great *Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs*, which is the sequel and justification of the *Reflections*.

If this series is to retain its previously high reputation, Volume VIII should be withdrawn from circulation, and a new Volume VIII prepared, to the same standards as were followed in Volumes II and V.

TURNING AWAY, with relief, from Volume VIII, let me conclude with one of the most remarkable passages in the *Reflections*. It is a passage which is highly relevant to the present scene in the former empire of Communism, and to some of the forces which are trying to fill the vacuum left by the collapse of Communism. It is, in effect, a treatise on the versatility of evil:

> We do not draw the moral lessons we might from history. On the contrary, without care it may be used to vitiate our minds and to destroy our happiness. In history a great volume is unrolled for our instruction, drawing the materials of future wisdom from the past errors and infirmities of mankind. It may, in the perversion, serve for a magazine, furnishing offensive and defensive weapons for parties in church and state, and supplying the means of keeping alive, or reviving dissensions and animosities, and adding fuel to civil fury. History consists, for the greater part, of the miseries brought upon the world by pride, ambition, avarice, revenge, lust, sedition, hypocrisy, ungoverned zeal, and all the train of disorderly appetites, which shake the public with the same
>
> *troubled storms that toss*
> *The private state, and render life unsweet.*
>
> These vices are the causes of those storms. Religion, morals, laws, prerogatives, privileges, liberties, rights of men, are the pretexts. The pretexts are always found in some specious appearance of a real good. You would not secure men from tyranny and sedition, by rooting out of the mind the principles to which these fraudulent pretexts apply? If you did, you would root out every thing that is valuable in the human breast. As these are the pretexts, so the ordinary actors and instruments in great public evils are kings, priests, magistrates, senates, parliaments, national assemblies, judges, and captains. You would not cure the evil by resolving, that there should be no more monarchs, nor ministers of state, nor of the gospel; no interpreters of law; no general officers; no public councils. You might change the names. The things in some shape must remain. A certain quantum of power must always exist in the community, in some hands, and under some appellation. Wise men will apply their remedies to vices, not to names; to the causes of evil which are permanent, not to the occasional organs by which they act, and the transitory modes in which they appear. Otherwise you will be wise historically, a fool in practice. Seldom have two ages the same fashion in their pretexts and the same modes of mischief. Wickedness is a little more inventive. Whilst you are discussing fashion, the fashion is gone by. The very same vice assumes a new body. The spirit transmigrates; and, far from losing its principle of life by the change of its appearance, it is renovated in its new organs with the fresh vigour of a juvenile activity. It walks abroad; it continues its ravages; whilst you are gibbeting the carcass, or demolishing the tomb. You are terrifying yourself with ghosts and apparitions, whilst your house is the haunt of robbers. It is thus with all those, who attending only to the shell and husk of history, think they are waging war with intolerance, pride, and cruelty, whilst, under colour of abhorring the ill principles of antiquated parties, they are authorizing and feeding the same odious vices in different factions, and perhaps in worse.

'Seldom have two ages the same fashion in their pretexts and the same modes of mischief. Wickedness is a little more inventive.'

Those last four words should be borne in mind as we contemplate some of the patterns emerging in the disintegrating empire of ruined Communism: the aftermath of the most ambitious and sustained innovative effort in human history. □

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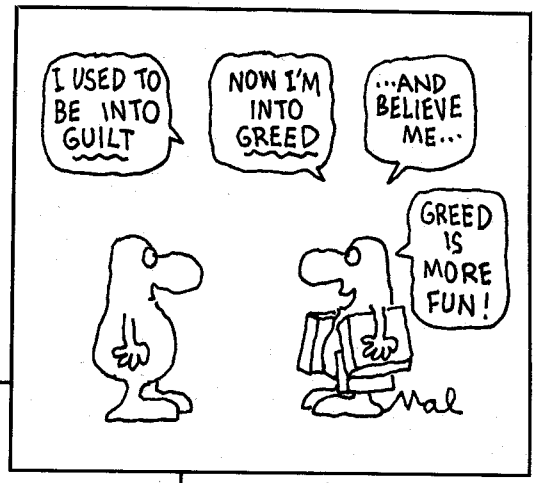

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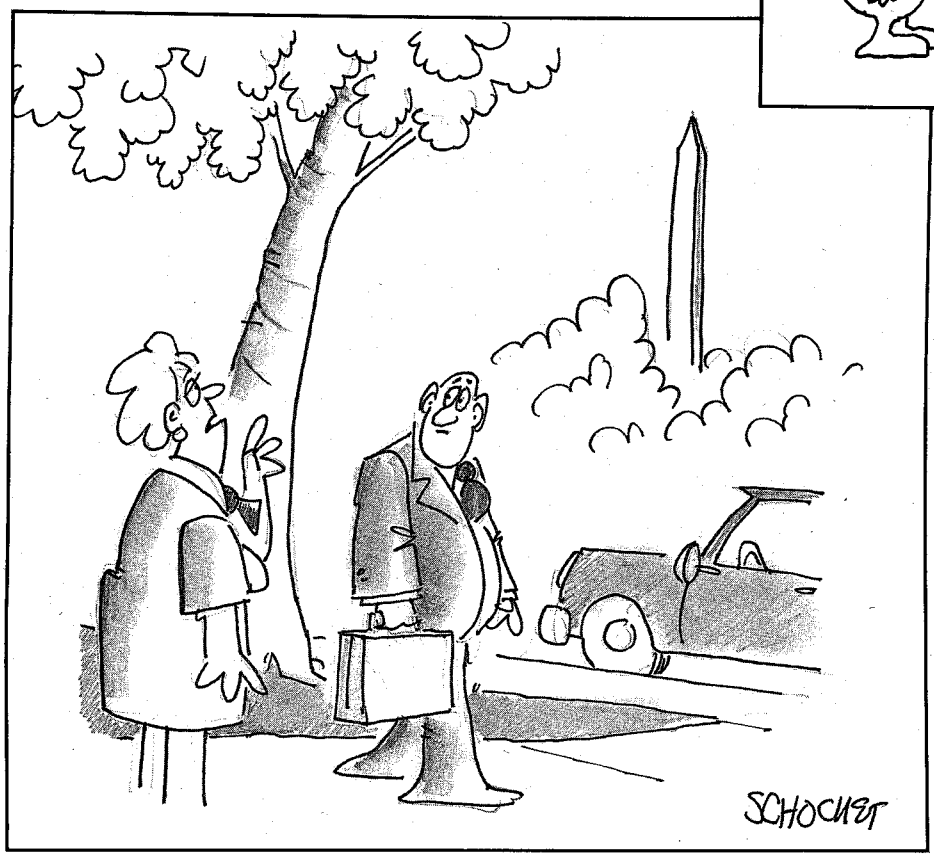
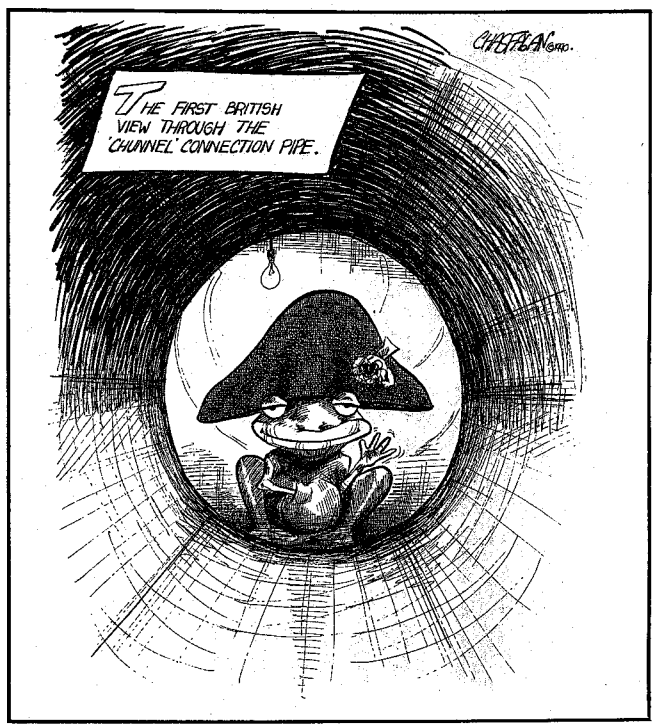


"Don't get caught, dear."



It's a Non-Starter

Poor Richard, in whose almanac
Advice for staying in the black
Still stimulates those with an itch
To join the gloriously rich,
Is pigeonholed by Democrats
Among the books on vampire bats.

W. H. VON DREELE

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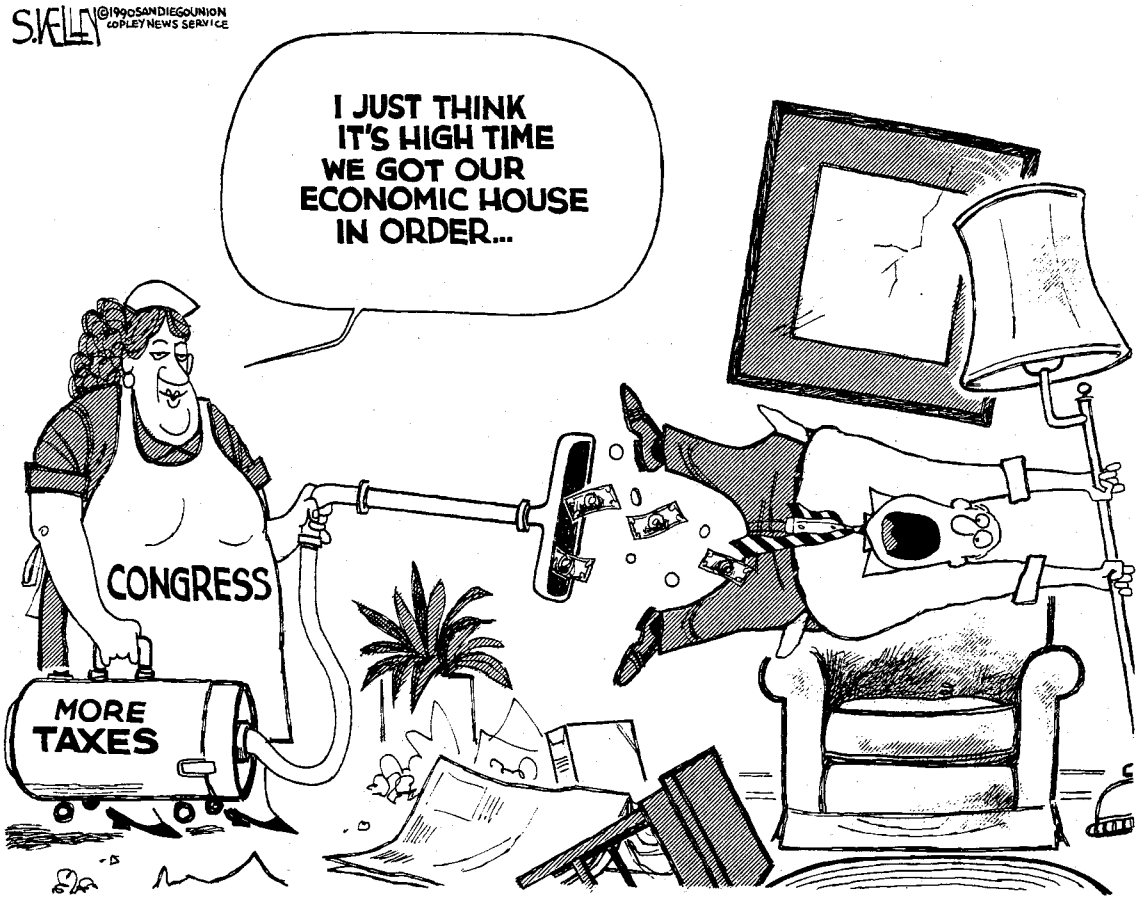
S. KELLEY ©1990 SAN DIEGO UNION COPLEY NEWS SERVICE
I JUST THINK IT'S HIGH TIME WE GOT OUR ECONOMIC HOUSE IN ORDER...
CONGRESS
MORE TAXES

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DARMAN'S DISASTER—BUSH'S RESPONSIBILITY

We face higher taxes and no spending cuts, but at least we got budget-process reform, right? Right: reform that makes it easier for Congress to undo the Reagan Revolution.

DANIEL J. MITCHELL

IT WAS only fitting that George Bush waited until election eve to sign into law the largest tax increase in American history. By reneging on his solemn no-new-taxes pledge, Bush had discarded his party's best political issue and paved the way for the loss of seats in both the Senate and the House. Democratic strategists are still amazed that the White House capitulated so easily and completely. Indeed, through much of the summer, many Democrats were convinced the budget summit was a trap designed to lure them into openly advocating tax increases.

After all, who would have predicted one year ago that George "Read My Lips" Bush would agree to a five-year budget deal that raised taxes by at least $170 billion, allowed spending to increase by at least $245 billion, and emasculated the Gramm–Rudman Deficit Reduction Law? Certainly not the voters. If they had been shown this package in October of 1988 and told it would become law in 1990, they would have assumed Michael Dukakis must have won the election in the meantime.

To make a bad situation even worse, the President did not get anything in exchange for breaking his pledge. When he called for "tax revenue increases" in June, he also insisted that a budget agreement include cuts in entitlement spending, a lower capital-gains tax, and reforms in the budget process. While Congress was delighted to raise taxes, the other "non-negotiable" requirements somehow never made it into the final package.

Richard Darman, director of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), continues to claim that the new "deficit reduction" package is a good one. Much as Ronald Reagan's advisors during the 1982 TEFRA debacle insisted the President got three dollars of spending cuts for every dollar of taxes, Bush's lieutenants apparently believe that repeating something often enough makes it true. Darman, for instance, claims the agreement cuts entitlement spending by $120 billion. In fact, entitlement spending is projected to grow by more than $200 billion over the next five years. Only under the Washington definition of a cut—increasing spending at a slower rate than previously planned—are there any savings.

Even under this slippery definition of a budget cut, Darman's entitlement savings are largely phony. He counts the transfer of $5.6 billion of revenue from the Postal Service to the general budget as an entitlement cut. Increasing taxes on banks is also counted as an entitlement cut, as is the provision shifting the time when certain retirement benefits are paid to federal employees. Delaying some student-loan payments is considered an entitlement cut, while agricultural savings have been made contingent on the increasingly unlikely completion of international trade negotiations. Keeping the taxpayer subsidy for the Part B portion of Medicare at 75 per cent is considered an entitlement cut. Provisions changing direct-loan programs into guaranteed-loan programs are counted as entitlement savings, demonstrating that politicians have failed to learn from the S&L deposit-insurance scandal that off-budget spending still costs real money.

The Bad News

DARMAN claims the Administration got budget-process reform in exchange for higher taxes, and in some senses he is right. The bad news is that the changes will make it even easier for Congress to spend other people's money.

Along with the two other stooges negotiating on behalf of the Administration, Treasury Secretary Nicholas Brady and Chief of Staff John Sununu, Darman did absolutely nothing to press for a tax-limitation or balanced-budget amendment in the agreement. Nor was there any serious discussion of the line-item veto or of

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requiring a super-majority vote to raise taxes. Instead, the White House negotiators effectively agreed to do away with Gramm–Rudman, the only part of the budget process that has helped control federal spending over the last five years.

For all its imperfections, Gramm–Rudman did limit how fast spending could grow. Federal spending in any given year could be no higher than the sum of projected tax revenues plus the maximum allowable deficit. While Congress always used loopholes and gimmicks to increase spending by more than the formula allowed, Gramm–Rudman clearly slowed the growth rate of federal spending, which is one reason why leading Democrats such as Senate Budget Committee Chairman James Sasser (D., Tenn.) and House Ways & Means Committee Chairman Dan Rostenkowski (D., Ill.) had come out for repealing the law.

An Empty Shell

LITTLE did they realize that the Bush Administration would be so accommodating. While Gramm–Rudman technically still exists, it is an empty shell. Its heart and soul—fixed deficit targets—have been replaced by deficit targets that are automatically adjusted upward whenever economic and technical assumptions are discovered to have been too optimistic. Supporters of the budget summit neglected to point out, naturally, that almost all unforeseen increases in government spending are attributable to changes in economic and technical assumptions. The goal of a balanced budget, which had been enshrined in the Gramm–Rudman law, is now replaced by a process analogous to a donkey chasing a carrot tied to the end of a stick.

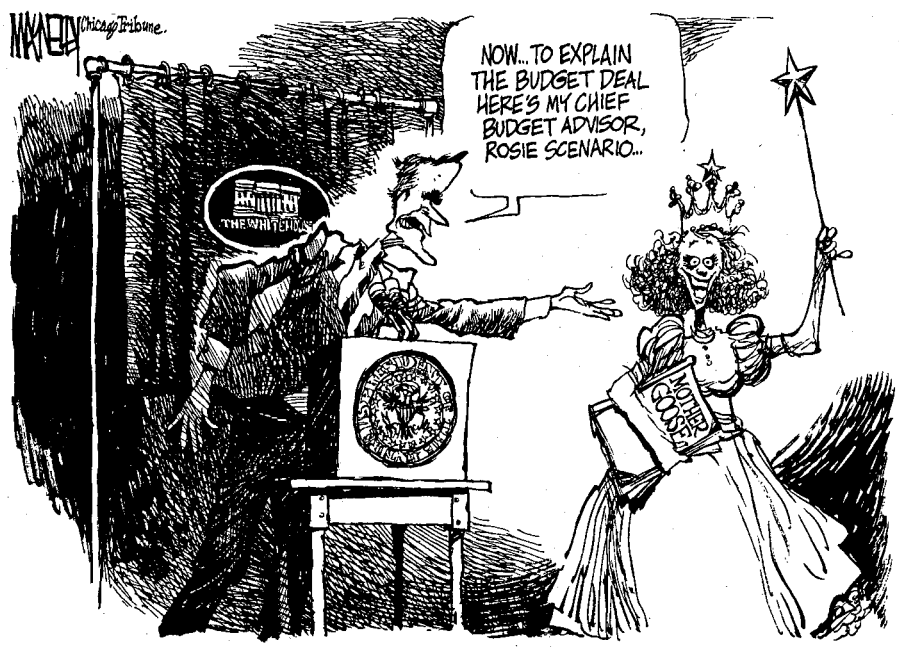
The President and others have portrayed the new annual caps on domestic, defense, and foreign-aid spending as a great breakthrough and a victory for fiscal responsibility. Once again, however, White House officials have mysteriously forgotten to mention that these spending "caps" are also automatically increased every time it is discovered that the Administration's economic and technical assumptions are wrong. Since the spending caps allow domestic spending to grow by more than 6 per cent yearly under current assumptions, skeptics may be excused for not viewing the creation of these caps as a great victory.

With regard to capital gains, the President failed to achieve a tax cut. Typically, the White House considers it a victory that the maximum effective tax rate on capital-gains income stayed at 28 per cent instead of rising to 31 per cent along with the maximum effective tax rate on regular income. It is worth noting that President Bush began the summit process insisting on a reduction in the capital-gains rate and no increase in the personal-income-tax rate and wound up losing on both fronts.

It is difficult to understand why the White House agreed to such a bad deal. According to Darman and his cronies, the President had no choice. Because the Democrats controlled Congress, he supposedly had to accept a deal that raised taxes in order to reduce the deficit. If deficit reduction had been the true goal, however, the Administration could have accepted a sequester—Gramm–Rudman's spending-control mechanism. Since a sequester would have occurred automatically in the absence of a budget agreement, the President did not need much congressional support. So long as he had enough votes to sustain his veto in either the House or the Senate, he would have won. Once a sequester took effect, the President could have used his tremendous leverage to force real entitlement and budget-process reforms in exchange for reducing the sequester's size to a more politically acceptable level.

The Administration apparently decided, however, that the federal budget was more important than the family budget, so the sequestration option was quickly dismissed in favor of cutting a deal with Congress. The effect of this fateful decision was to give Senate Majority Leader George Mitchell (D., Me.) and House Speaker Tom Foley (D., Wash.) effective veto power, since no budget could pass without their approval. Given this unilateral abandonment of political power to the legislative branch, it is no wonder the President wound up signing a bill that so closely reflected the preferences of congressional Democrats.

Since the damage has already been done for this year, rather than further post-mortems, a more productive exercise might be to analyze what the budget disaster portends for next year.


Chicago Tribune
NOW...TO EXPLAIN THE BUDGET DEAL HERE'S MY CHIEF BUDGET ADVISOR, ROSIE SCENARIO...
THE WHITE HOUSE
MOTHER GOOSE

Unfortunately, the outlook is grim. The same White House that meekly acquiesced to Democrats' demands, and that had earlier kowtowed to Chinese thugs, pulled no punches when it came to punishing natural allies who stood firm against taxes. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce's firm opposition to taxes—unusual in the Washington business community, which is normally more concerned with buying favors than with protecting free enterprise—motivated the White House to bully some corporations into dropping their membership in that organization.

Those Republican senators and representatives who stuck with their no-tax-increase pledges attracted White

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House anger. One Republican congressman even had his seats in the presidential box at the Kennedy Center withdrawn because he said he would vote no. On a more serious note, the White House is doing everything it can, including running a puppet candidate, to unseat National Republican Congressional Committee Chairman Guy Vander Jagt. His crime: supporting Ed Rollins, the Committee's executive director, who tried to minimize election losses by advising Republican candidates to stick to their no-tax-increase promises. [See also "The Enemy of My Enemy," p. 24.]

The White House has even purged remaining conservatives at the Republican National Committee, including Don Todd (former RNC "Man of the Year") and his team in the Opposition Research division. Bush might not be President today were it not for the evidence of Dukakis's pathetic record on taxes, crime, and values that Todd and his staff amassed, but their commitment to principle made them expendable regardless of how well they did their jobs. Speaking of the RNC, the disabling illness of Chairman Lee Atwater has been more than a personal tragedy. Many observers feel that Atwater was the one person who might, through his political acumen and personal influence, have been able to keep Bush from breaking his pledge and stumbling into a bad budget deal.

Most troubling of all, it appears that the tax-and-spend budget agreement is merely a symptom of a more fundamental opposition to conservative values and beliefs that has taken hold inside the Bush White House. If this trend goes unchallenged, George Bush may well continue to stumble down the road to Carternomics, undoing the accomplishments of Ronald Reagan. It is time for conservatives to decide whether those accomplishments are worth preserving. □

ELECTION AFTERMATH

THE DEMOCRATS' DILEMMA

RICHARD BROOKHISER

NATIONAL REVIEW'S conference on the topic "Do Conservatives Have a Role in the Democratic Party?" took place in the National Press Club in Washington on November 14. Given the timing—a week after the election, a month after the Bush/Darman budget deal—it would have been equally appropriate to ask, as Wick Allison noted in his introductory remarks, whether conservatives have a role in the Republican White House. But the questions are related: since conservatives and Democrats face a common problem of political exclusion these days, it is worth considering whether they might share political solutions. So *NR* brought together some pollsters, some pundits, and some pols to explore the question, along with three of its own—John O'Sullivan, Bill McGurn, and myself—for kibitzing.

History, at least, suggests that the Democrats' options are open, for the party has been many things to its many members over the years. The famous Democratic convention of 1924 was torn between the forces of William Gibbs McAdoo, who was essentially the candidate of the Ku Klux Klan, and the forces of Al Smith, who ten years later became a spokesman for the Liberty League. Its compromise candidate, John W. Davis, would find himself, thirty years later, arguing the states'-rights position on *Brown* v. *Board of Education* before the Supreme Court. In 1960, John F. Kennedy, running for President as a liberal, attacked his Republican predecessor for being weak on defense; once in office, he cut taxes. In the last decade, although the party itself remained resolutely liberal in the post-McGovern sense of the word, millions of registered Democrats crossed the line to vote for Ronald Reagan.

Any party that has changed so drastically in the past could, in theory, change again. Serious discussion of the possibility would have to focus on three questions: Who are the conservative Democrats? What are the potential conservative Democratic issues? Who are the possible conservative Democratic leaders?

Bill Hamilton, of the consulting firm Hamilton, Frederick and Schneiders, made the most comprehensive effort to pinpoint the Reagan Democrats. This group, he said, consisted of four types of people: fifty- to sixty-year-olds; urban Catholics; young men; and native Southern whites. The Democrats in these categories who had voted for Reagan make up perhaps 10 per cent of the electorate, or half of the national swing vote (the 20 per cent that hangs between each party's solid core of 40). He added, however, that the swing group is larger than these numbers suggest, for there are parallel clusters of voters in Republican ranks who respond to the same sorts of political appeals.

What Can They Say?

WHAT ISSUES appeal to these voters—issues the Democratic Party could advance? Several speakers—John O'Sullivan, Stan Greenberg (of the consulting firm Greenberg and Lake), and former New York mayor Ed Koch—stressed crime. Koch was especially upset about his party's failure to address the issue, and he addressed it with his customary panache. "The death penalty doesn't solve crimes, but it's *moral*. People are tired of being patsies in their apartments at night. They want the government to do something for them. Not us Democrats!"

William Lind, who came to the Free Congress Foundation from the staff of Gary Hart, where he had worked as a strategist for the military-reform movement, thought the party could make a broad tack to the right on values. He argued that there was a hunger in the nation, as yet unexploited by either party, for a return to traditional values, since the last few decades had demonstrated that untradi-

Mr. Brookhiser's The Way of the WASP *is due out this month from Free Press.*

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Pat Buchanan's column on page 1.

DEFENSE

For quick reference to all articles, turn to TOPIC INDEX on page 1.

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GOP forfeited its opportunity

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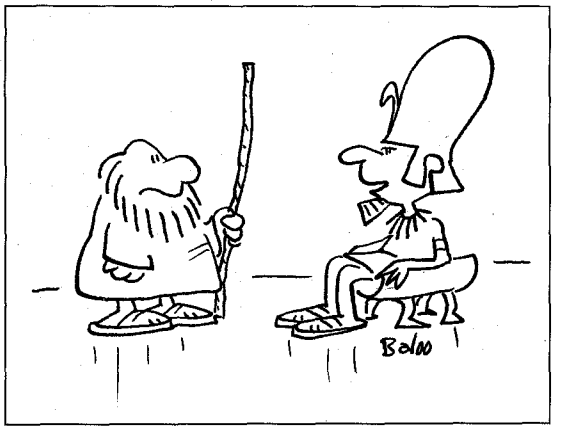
tional values don't work. He predicted that the leadership of each party would resist such a move, though the country-club elite of the GOP, wedded to getting and spending, might be harder to buck. Lind's specific proposals ranged from a call for a war on bureaucracy in both government and business, to the suggestion that our anti-drug warriors contaminate the drug supply with unpleasant chemicals, such as emetics. Lind should expect some cavalry skirmishes with conservatives before he engages the Democratic infantry.



"Let your people go? That would mess up my whole affirmative-action program."

Stan Greenberg, whose firm advised Connecticut Senator Joseph Lieberman in his successful campaign to unseat Lowell Weicker, emphasized that Reagan Democrats were "not supply-siders" and "not pro-free-enterprise." They believe "money is real," and shouldn't be spent profligately. But they are "anti-rich," "anti-corporate," and "populist."

The journalist Charles Krauthammer denied that there was much in common between conservatives and Democrats, populist or not. Krauthammer wrote speeches for Vice President Mondale in the 1980 campaign, but he had left the party by the time Mondale ran for President, and he believes that the obsessions which pushed him away still maintain their grip. The Democrats, he said, were bound to become defeatist about the Gulf (though he acknowledged that isolationism had even deeper roots on the Right). At home, they were willing to "deconstruct the entire idea of American nationhood" by their support of multiculturalism in the schools. Such programs, if enacted, portend the Balkanization of American society.

Who Will Say It?

ASSUMING that there are conservative Democratic voters and (some) conservative Democratic issues, where are the conservative Democratic politicians? The conference was attended by two U.S. representatives, Beverly Byron (Md.) and Gene Taylor (Miss.); two state legislators, David Halbrook (Miss.) and William Bulger (Mass.); Koch; and Virginia Governor Douglas Wilder. Many of the pols, unused to such a venue—and perhaps afraid that their presence would be reported in the press, even as Koch once threatened to have the vice squad release the names of johns—took pains to establish their liberalism on key issues. Koch boasted that he had campaigned for the legalization of abortion as long ago as 1962, while Congressman Taylor thumped the tub of protection, asking how many people in the audience were wearing American watches. (I held up my forty-year-old Elgin, but he was not impressed.)

The Democrats generated the most heat on the subject of the Civil Rights Bill. Governor Wilder blasted the Bush Administration for characterizing the bill's affirmative-action provisions as quotas. "As one who has had some experience with real racial-quota laws, let me say that the Civil Rights Act [*sic*] of 1990 is not one of those laws. . . . Surely, a President who stands up to the intimidation of Saddam Hussein must stand up to the intimidation of extremists like Jesse Helms." Decoded, what the governor said was this: Helms is a racist, re-elected in a racist campaign; Bush and Helms agree on the Civil Rights Bill; therefore, anyone who agrees with them is a racist too.

That means, then, that Ed Koch is a racist, for Koch only an hour earlier had denounced what he called the Kennedy–Hawkins bill: "I will not call it a civil-rights bill, because it's *not*. . . . When affirmative action is presented as goals, timetables, and sanctions, it means quotas. . . . If that isn't a quota bill, I don't know what is." Governor Wilder's attempt to exclude opponents of the bill from the civilized community suggests that he, and the leadership of the Democratic Party, fear that Koch's opinion is widely shared, and that only a pre-emptive moral strike, employing nuclear and biological weapons, will save the bill, and themselves.

In the second, conservative half of his speech, the governor focused on fiscal responsibility, as practiced by himself in Virginia. "It's meant making some tough choices. It's meant having the willpower to say 'no.' " I thought I had heard this before, and indeed I had—from Charles Krauthammer's former employer. "We must cut spending and pay as we go. If [Congress doesn't] hold the line, I will. That's what the veto is for." Thus Walter Mondale, in his acceptance speech at the 1984 Democratic convention. The point of the recollection is that "fiscal responsibility" is some of the saddest fustian in American politics. The seriousness of the rhetoric depends entirely on the politician's record. Wilder's in Virginia is, so far, good. What it would become on the national level remains to be seen.

The most conservative of the Democrats was William Bulger, who told us what life as the leader of the Massachusetts State Senate, when Michael Dukakis was governor, was like. It was as grim as you might think. Sadly, the TV cameras which had flocked to record Governor Wilder had dispersed by the time Bulger spoke. His thoughtful manner and his local field of action might not have registered with producers in any case.

I left the conference, as I had expected to, on a dying fall. Conservative Democrats exist, and so do issues which mobilize them. (By no means only those discussed at the conference.) But the party has been so thoroughly liberalized that few of its leaders seem willing or able to employ the latter to recruit the former, in any way more serious than uttering half-understood catch-phrases.

Bulger had spoken of the difficulty conservative Democrats face in sustaining political effort over the long haul: the attachment to Burke's "little platoon" which makes civic action seem unimportant, or unattractive. So long as that remains the case, Reagan Democrats will be swing voters, and the best hope conservatives have of dealing with the Bush White House will be repentance, or rebellion. □

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THIRD WORLD CRISIS

PAYING ONE'S DEBTS

CHRISTIE DAVIES

RARELY has so much humbug been written as on the subject of the "Third World debt crisis." Professional leftists want the debts of these countries, owed to Western banks or Western governments, to be written off altogether, and even the moderately progressive are urging a suspension of the payment of interest on these loans and a re-scheduling of the repayment of the capital.

It is very difficult to take these arguments seriously, for the banks are in no way to blame for the recklessness with which backward countries like Tanzania, industrializing countries like Brazil, Mexico, or Greece, and even wealthy nations like Sweden borrowed enormous sums of money abroad and squandered it. Why should the banks or other foreign lenders be expected to pay for the corruption, incompetence, and lack of foresight of underdeveloped politicians? Those who say that this should be done argue that otherwise the poverty of the peoples whose unrepresentative rulers borrowed so recklessly will be exacerbated. True, we have a duty to act charitably toward those who are living in poverty, but is it really wise to reward countries that hid their talents in the ground while failing to assist the more prudent poor?

Mr. Davies is a professor of sociology at the University of Reading.

It is probably the case that some of the Third World borrowers will default and welsh on their foreign debts, much as the state of Pennsylvania did in the early nineteenth century, to the disgust of British investors and the scorn and ridicule of the famous moralist and humorist, the Reverend Sydney Smith. Sydney Smith did not wring his hands like modern clerics, but forthrightly called the Pennsylvanians thieves and swindlers. Many other borrowers defaulted in the course of that century, notably Peru. The only penalty for the defaulters was that no one would lend them money until the memory of their sin had faded from the minds of creditor nations.

Today we fear that such massive defaulting would lead to bank failures and even the collapse of the entire financial system. The Third World politicians know this and use it as a blackmail weapon against Western banks and governments. Yet there is no real reason why they should not be treated like any other debtor, i.e., declared bankrupt with the proviso that their assets shall be seized to the amount of the debt. Something roughly similar

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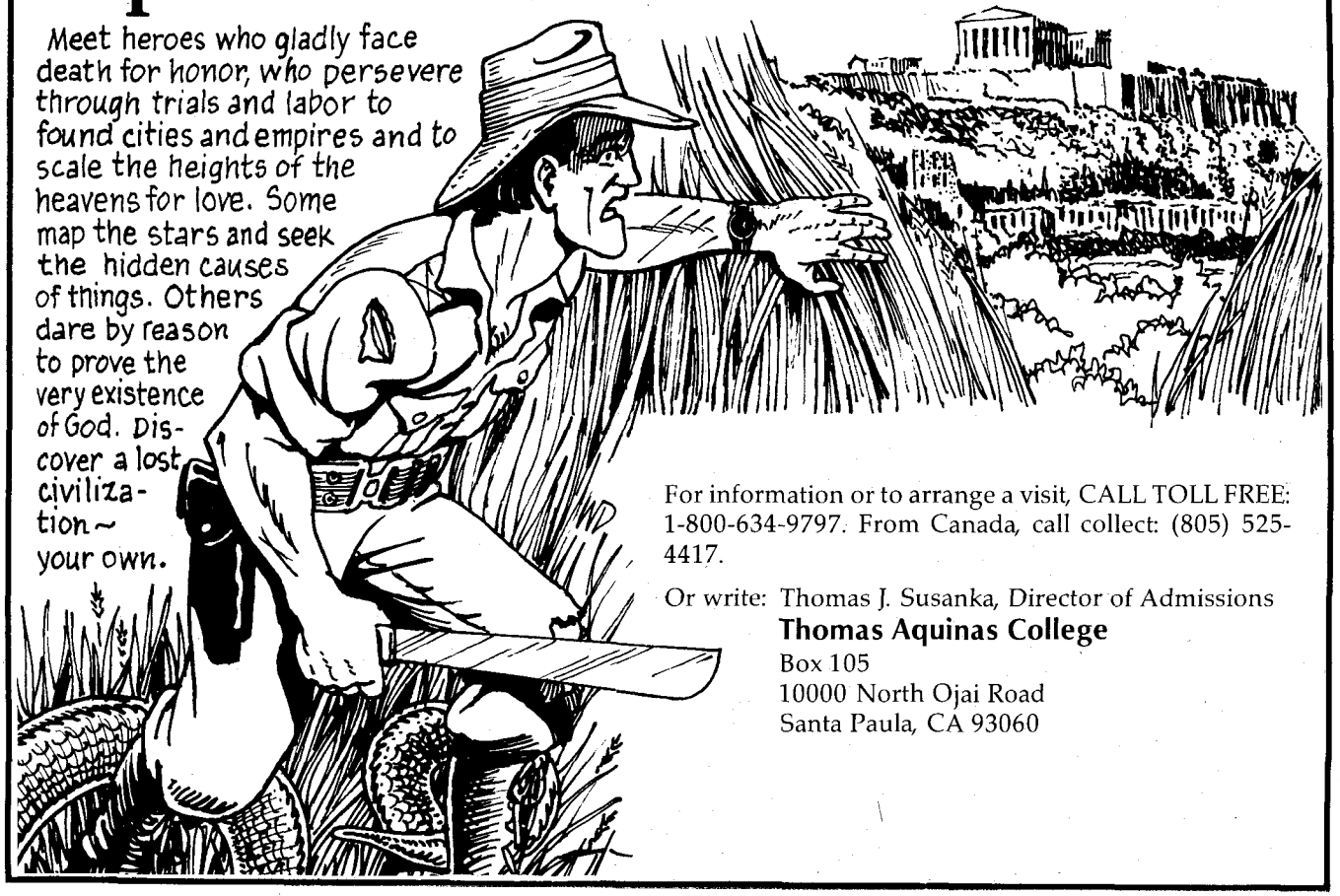
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occurred to the independent Dominion of Newfoundland, which went bankrupt in the 1930s and was to all intents and purposes taken over and run by the British Treasury for several years. Newfoundland never regained its independence, and in 1949 its citizens chose in a referendum to become a part of Canada.

The Taking Game

GIVEN the tendency of the rulers of Third World kleptocracies and schnorrocracies to seize the possessions of their own citizens and foreigners alike, there exists in many countries a large pool of state-owned land, capital, and mineral rights that could be used to pay off their international debts. Eastern European countries such as Bulgaria are already offering an equity stake in their state corporations as a means of paying off their debts to the West, which ultimately means foreign private ownership of their manufacturing and extractive industries. It is only the hysterical pride of the underdeveloped politicians that prevents their countries from settling their obligations on the same basis and bringing the debt crisis to an end.

Some countries of course may not have a sufficiently large or profitable state-owned sector for their creditors to take over, and it would be quite wrong to encourage them to sequester the private property of their own citizens. Instead, deals between states should be struck in which changes of frontier occur without changes in the ownership of property. Just as in the past the United States bought Alaska from Russia or made the Gadsden Purchase from Mexico, so today it should seek further territory for cash on the understanding that those who live there would be immediately entitled to American citizenship. It would make more sense to purchase sparsely inhabited northwestern Mexico than to continue to permit illegal immigration to undermine America's safety and integrity.

Similarly, a territory-for-debt swap would permit a just and peaceful solution to the problem of the future frontier between a united Germany and Poland. It is now clear that the transfer to Poland of the German territories of Prussia and Silesia to compensate Poland for the Nazi–Soviet aggression of 1939 was only a means of extending the Soviet military empire. Many of the Germans living there were driven out by force or threats, and other "Germans" of mixed German and Polish ancestry stayed and called themselves Poles to appease their new masters. Now they want to be Germans again, though there are probably more *Volkswagen-Deutsch* there than *Volksdeutsch*. However, these regions have also received large numbers of new Polish settlers from those parts of eastern Poland annexed by the Soviet Union, and these people have a right to the land they have acquired and the homes they have built. If Poland were to agree to transfer some of the old German territories back to Germany in exchange for Germany's paying off *all* Polish debts to Western countries, a problem that has vexed Europe throughout the twentieth century could be resolved peacefully. Germany would have purchased the reunification of its lands and people, and Poland would have found a route from its present poverty and pollution to a state of freedom and prosperity. Those Poles who became German citizens as a by-product of the deal would have all the rights and privileges of that citizenship and a place in Europe's most dynamic economy and most stable democracy. Their lives and possessions would be as secure as those of the millions of people with Polish names already listed in West German phone books.

The market processes that can provide a solution to the problems of national indebtedness could also be used as a means of unfreezing other chronic conflicts involving disputed territory or ethnic minorities in, say, Israel and Palestine, or Kashmir. If we had in the past created a market in territory and citizenship, many devastating and expensive wars could have been avoided. For a sum of money far smaller than the cost of the Falklands war, Argentina could have purchased the remote Islas Malvinas from Britain *and* given compensation of several million dollars to each and every British resident (all 1,200 of them) who chose to leave. In most areas of life in advanced countries, buying and selling has long since replaced coercion as a means of settling disputes. Why can't we transform international relations in the same way? □

THE IVORY FOXHOLE

EPISTEMOLOGICAL FASCISM AT DUKE

JEFFREY HART

I WAS ABOUT to write that the turmoil at Duke University is extraordinary. Unfortunately, the truth is that it is extraordinary only in being an unusually clear-cut example of a general trend.

Before I get to the current case, a bit of background. Duke University in the past was regarded as a nice Southern finishing school and a good party place. Men wore jackets and ties. Women wore skirts. The university was rich, having been generously endowed by the Duke tobacco fortune.

Then Duke University got ambitious. It offered "star" professors lucrative contracts in order to lure them away from other universities. It became an academic magnet.

But in the process Duke bought itself a big problem. The "stars" in the liberal arts turned out to be deconstructionists, post-modernists, Marxists, feminists—all at salaries of about $100,000 per year.

Now there has emerged a countermovement at Duke, a nascent chapter of the National Association of Scholars, headquartered in Princeton, New Jersey. The NAS is an association of mainstream academics, heavily neo-

(Continues on page 58)

Mr. Hart's latest book is Acts of Recovery.

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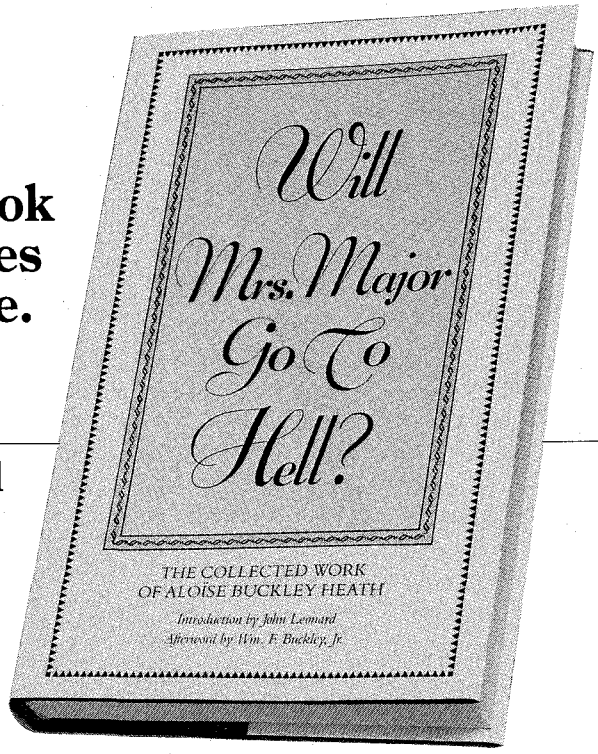
Will Mrs. Major Go To Hell?
THE COLLECTED WORK OF ALOÏSE BUCKLEY HEATH
Introduction by John Leonard
Afterword by Wm. F. Buckley, Jr.

You can get the brand-new updated edition of Aloïse Buckley Heath's **Will Mrs. Major Go to Hell?** directly from *National Review* for just $16.95.

Here is what the "Book-of-the-Month Club News" said about **Will Mrs. Major Go to Hell?** when it was first published:

> "It may be the warmest, funniest book about suburban family life since *Please Don't Eat the Daisies*, and it suggests that a true talent was lost when Mrs. Heath died at the untimely age of 48. She was one of ten children and had ten of her own, which helps explain why she was busy. The picture she gives of the way her family lived is both touching and hilarious, and she also casts a wry glance at the social scene in such pieces as one entitled 'Ladies Month in the Slicks,' wherein she notes, regarding the suggestion that harried housewives be given a paid-up charm course for Christmas, 'This gift had better be limited to harried housewives you know very well indeed.'"

...and we honestly can't remember when we've seen a more tender, poignant collection of stories. The late Aloïse Buckley Heath (William F. Buckley Jr.'s sister) wrote some absolutely priceless things about her own family, and the early days of *National Review*, plus some marvelously funny satirical observations on our contemporary habits and institutions.

There is something in this book to please every member of your family. You'll meet all the Heath children and encounter with them such American institutions as the New Math and the episode of the riotous carpool.

Don't miss her wonderfully entertaining views on soap operas or her recollections as an inadvertent fund-raiser (successful and highly unorthodox) for Smith College. Her Christmas stories are authentic classics, especially the Heaths' version of a Trapp Family Christmas.

And don't miss her "Baby in the Bathroom," "A Letter for Maureen" or "Politics and Mortal Sin." **Will Mrs. Major Go to Hell?** captures perfectly Mrs. Heath's own vibrant spirit ... the book is an absolute classic of tenderness and humanity.

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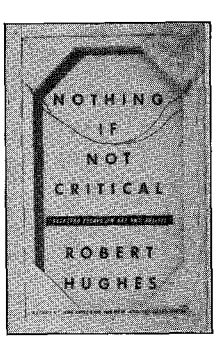
CHRISTMAS BOOKS

Twice Blest

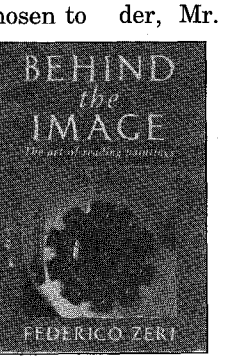
JAMES GARDNER

AS THE Yuletide approaches, the spirit of giving descends upon us like the yearly taxation that it is. As if the monetary liabilities weren't daunting enough, we are faced, nowadays, with the urgent necessity of being thoughtful in our gift-giving. Neckties and scarves having become something of a standing jest, it is probably no longer possible to bestow them on anyone without sending the wrong kind of message. No, now we are expected to choose our gifts with care and imagination, to say something about the recipient and ourselves.

In the circumstances, we can only thank the benevolent Deity for bringing into being the Art Book, which in recent years has been produced in a profusion and lavishness heretofore unimaginable. Art books, to put it crassly, are prepackaged thoughtfulness. "It is twice blest," as Portia says. "It blesses him that gives and him that takes." While the purchaser is scoring points for refinement and good taste, the recipient is flattered to be deemed worthy of the gift. Of course there is always the sort of bonehead who was hoping Santa would leave him a braided guitar sling or a new pair of cleats. But as readers of NATIONAL REVIEW are unlikely to know any such people, this needn't trouble us unduly. Once you accept the premise of the art book as the suitable donative for the holidays, the only question is which book to buy. Such a bewildering variety appears in time for the Christmas shopping season that the would-be shopper may well need assistance. Here, then, the Right Art Books.



There is, if anything, a greater aptness to giving art books this time around than in the past. Controversy over the NEA has brought to the forefront of national politics a province of culture, the visual arts, that, especially in the United States, has become paramount as never before. Art has become in our time the cultural activity *par excellence*. Usually it has been in the visual arts that the most revolutionary and forward-looking minds have chosen to express themselves, and it has been to art rather than music or literature that we have looked in trying to gauge the pulse of the avant-garde. Furthermore, with photographic reproduction brought to new heights of perfection, the work of art has acquired the volatile reproducibility of newsprint. In an age of short attention spans, it communicates with an immediacy that not even television can match.



At the same time, it remains the only province of culture whose artifacts can be privately acquired and preserved in their uniqueness. This element, the obverse of the possibility of infinite replication, has brought into being the dizzy, Fellini-esque circus of the auction houses, the fetishistic craving for authenticity serviced by the myriad galleries of lower Manhattan, as well as the institutionalized cynicism of the blockbuster exhibition. We live in an age in which Madonna and Jack Nicholson recognize art collecting to be a wise career move, in which Robert De Niro has moved his fledgling film company to Tribeca to be where the real action is, and in which the art world is chronicled not so much in its prostrate and useless trade publications as in *People* magazine.

Into this miasma rides the redoubtable Robert Hughes like a paladin of old. His new volume of essays, ***Nothing if Not Critical***, collected over the past decade, is surely one of the finest art books of the fall season. It is the sort of text that reminds us how to look at art with fresh eyes, what it was that got us interested in art in the first place. Everything that a critic must be able to do, Hughes does with effortless bravura. He can mount an intellectual argument with lean and lethal agility, and he can succumb to meditations of an almost baroque grandiosity. He is one of only a few critics in America who has heard of Raphael, and he seems uncannily able to write authoritatively about Holbein and Poussin with one hand, while, with the other, skinning alive such unappetizing deadbeats as Warhol and Jeff Koons. Coming from Down Under, Mr. Hughes has an indurated sense of privileged alienation from the twee-ness of the art world. Sometimes this is so strong and arrogant that you begin to hear the flat, broad tones of the Australian twang protruding, with naked effrontery, from under the elegant rhythms of his expert prose.

Aside from a few lapses in judgment, Hughes, the art critic for *Time* magazine, is overwhelmingly on the side of the angels. One can only admire his virulent antagonism to the cant and hypocrisy of the SoHoites: "Schnabel's work is to painting what Stallone's is to acting—a lurching display of oily pectorals." Jean-Michel Basquiat's meteoric career, ending in his death from a heroin overdose, "was a tale of a small untrained talent caught in the buzz-saw of art-world promotion, absurdly overrated by dealers, collectors, critics, and, not least, himself." At the same time, he can rise brilliantly to the task of describing painters like Chardin. Mr. Hughes is the best art critic in America at the moment, and it is not too great an exaggeration to say that an age that could engender him is not as far gone in the way of corruption as we often believe.

From across the sea comes the work of another angel of enlightenment,

Mr. Gardner writes frequently about art for NR *and* Commentary.

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this time the eminent Italian art historian Federico Zeri. I have never before read or heard of a book quite like his newly translated ***Behind the Image***. It comprises six long chapters, originally delivered as lectures, which the author is pleased to call conversations, for a very good reason. This is a little like what, in the last century, publishers would have titled "Gleanings" or something of the sort. Each chapter has a core theme (Antiquity, High Renaissance, Modernism) around which the author speaks as the whim moves him. Through the most tenuous of ligaments, Zeri digresses from the main theme, digresses from his digressions, and sometimes forgets altogether to return to the point he was originally making. This sounds, of course, like a recipe for disaster, and so it would be in the hands of a lesser writer and savant. But Zeri is so compulsively interesting, so obsessively enamored of his subject that the initially perplexed reader is finally delighted to follow the author wherever his fancy draws him.

Zeri is, alas, a dying breed. It is possible that our culture, with its mirthless, professionalized preoccupation with specialized precincts of knowledge, will never again bring forth a generation as effortlessly erudite and at home in European culture as the best of Zeri's generation have been. Though he is without question one of the deans of Old Master scholarship, Zeri can converse originally about the Germanic invasions, Greek literature, modernist physics, and much besides. Above all, Zeri is interested in the Great Tradition of painting. Knowledgeable about every detour and every by-way of his subject, he has remarkable facts to impart. Not the least appealing aspect of this work is the palpable pleasure Zeri takes in saying the sort of things that you simply aren't supposed to say: "These intellectuals live directly off the ignorance of the public and the obscurity of texts, so anything the masses can understand annoys them, since, in the long run, it can put them out of work." Or this: "I do not believe in improvisers, in people who, never having done a drawing in their lives, take a sheet of copper and produce an etching that other people then declare to be an outstanding work of art. To me, they are all frauds." In the midst of this battery of light and urbane mockery, Zeri admin-

National Review's Christmas Book List

Recommended by James Gardner:

The Altarpiece in Renaissance Italy, by Jacob Burkhardt, edited by Peter Humphrey (Cambridge, 240 pp., 200 illustrations, $100)

Behind the Image, by Federico Zeri (St. Martin's, 541 pp., 127 illustrations, $40)

Beaux-Arts Architecture in New York, by Edmund Gillon Jr., commentary by Henry Hope Reed (Dover, 96 pp., 108 illustrations, $8.95)

The Disasters of War (Dover, 97 pp., 83 illustrations, $6.95)

George Caleb Bingham (Harry N. Abrams, 192 pp., 85 illustrations, $37.50)

Goya's Los Caprichos (Dover, 183 pp., 87 illustrations, $5.95)

The Graphic Works of Peter Bruegel the Elder, by H. Arthur Klein (Dover, 160 pp., 64 illustrations, $7.95)

Janson's History of Art for Young People, edited by Sheila Franklin (Harry N. Abrams, 422 pp., 483 illustrations, $29.95)

Liubov Popova, by Dmitri V. Sarabianov and Natalia L. Adaskina (Harry N. Abrams, 396 pp., 433 illustrations, $85)

Monet's Cathedral, by Joachim Pissaro (Knopf, 108 pp., 30 illustrations, $35)

Nothing if Not Critical, by Robert Hughes (Knopf, 352 pp., $24.95)

Paintings in the Hermitage, by Colin Eisler (Stewart, Tabori & Chang, 656 pp., 600 illustrations, $85)

The Rape of the Lock, by Alexander Pope, illustrated by Aubrey Beardsley (Dover, 47 pp., $4.95)

Sculpture: The Great Art of the Middle Ages, by Georges Duby (Rizzoli, 320 pp., 518 illustrations, $85)

Venetian Palaces, by Alvise Zorzi (Rizzoli, 532 pp., 494 illustrations, $95)

Recommended by Brad Miner in "Random Notes," p. 56:

Beijing Diary, by Charlton Heston (Simon & Schuster, 176 pp., $18.95)

The Brothers Karamazov, by Fyodor Dostoyevsky, translated by Richard Pevear and Larissa Volkhonsky (North Point Press, 796 pp., $29.95)

A Christmas Carol, by Charles Dickens, illustrated by Roberto Innocenti (Stewart, Tabori & Chang/Creative Education, 152 pp., $25)

The Christmas Cookie Book, by Judy Knipe and Barbara Marks (Fawcett Columbine, 144 pp., $14.95)

Dinosaur Dream, by Dennis Nolan (Macmillan, 32 pp., $13.95)

The Great Crusade: A New Complete History of the Second World War, by H. P. Willmott (Free Press, 512 pp., $24.95)

The Iliad, by Homer, translated by Robert Fagles (Viking, 702 pp., $35)

In All His Glory: The Life of William S. Paley, by Sally Bedell Smith (Simon & Schuster, 784 pp., $29.95)

The Lees of Virginia, by Paul C. Nagel (Oxford, 352 pp., $24.95)

Life: World War II (Little, Brown, 448 pp., $50)

Melville: Redburn, White-Jacket, Moby Dick (Library of America, 1,456 pp., $30)

Memoirs of the Second World War, by Winston S. Churchill (Houghton Mifflin, 1,076 pp., $35)

Moby Dick, or The Whale, by Herman Melville, illustrated by Rockwell Kent (Modern Library, 822 pp., $17.95)

Puss 'n' Boots, by Charles Perrault, illustrated by Fred Marcellino (Farrar, Straus, 32 pp., $14.95)

The Road to Disunion, by William W. Freehling (Oxford, 656 pp., $30)

The Russian Revolution, by Richard Pipes (Knopf, 976 pp., $40)

The U.S. Army in World War II: A Pictorial Record, compiled by the Center of Military History, United States Army (Artabras, 1,430 pp., $49.98)

Vladimir Nabokov: The Russian Years, by Brian Boyd (Princeton, 598 pp., $25)

Also recommended in this issue:

The Civil War: An Illustrated History, by Geoffrey C. Ward, with Ric and Ken Burns (Knopf, 426 pp., $50). Also available on video: Time-Life Video, 800-621-7026, or 800-345-8300

Five Star Folk Art, selected by Jean Lipman, Robert Bishop, Elizabeth V. Warren, and Sharon L. Eisenstat (Harry N. Abrams, 176 pp., $39.95)

Memoirs, by W. T. Sherman (Library of America, 1,164 pp., $35—also boxed with Grant's *Memoirs* at $70)

Memoirs and Selected Letters, 1839-65, by U. S. Grant (Library of America, 1,190 pp., $35)

None Died in Vain: The Saga of the American Civil War, by Robert Leckie (HarperCollins, 622 pp., $29.95)

The Oxford Illustrated History of Christianity, edited by John McManners (Oxford, 724 pp., $39.95)

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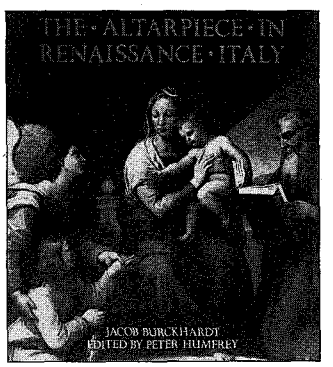
isters some good advice on how to look at paintings, how to spot forgeries, what weight to place upon interpretations, and so forth.

This advice can be put to immediate use with a number of fine art books that have recently come on the market. Foremost among these is surely Jacob Burckhardt's ***The Altarpiece in Renaissance Italy***. First published in 1898, the year after Burckhardt's death, this is an impressive testament to the advances made in the production of the art book. Burckhardt's book is one of the earliest works of modern art history, a discipline which this Swiss sage largely invented in his legendary masterpiece, the *Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*. Unfortunately, back in the 1890s photographs were still a rare and costly commodity, and the first edition went unillustrated. Now, for the first time, this work is reissued in full-blown glory with two hundred illustrations, most of them in color.

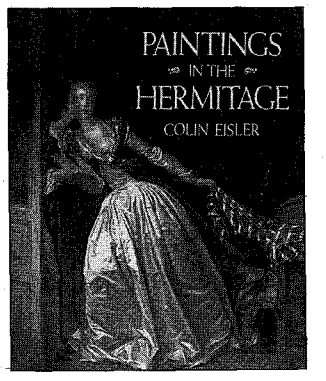


THIS IS THE sort of book that Burckhardt could only have dreamt of. The deep, rich colors of the Renaissance pour off the page. The text itself remains serviceable, but rather in the way that some Model Ts can still run, and some Coronas from the Twenties can still type out a legible letter. We now know a great deal more about art than Burckhardt knew, and even the knowledge we share has been poured into more plausible schemata than the one that Burckhardt had to invent. But there is still much to be learnt from Burckhardt as he takes us from the earliest Christian works, through the gold-ground polyptychs of Duccio and Giotto, up through the High Renaissance to the early Baroque.

But above all, it is the incomparable reproductions that make this model of art publishing so appealing. They are the sort of illustrations that inspire in children their first passion for art, that sail unresisted into the brain, there to remain as ineradicable memories through a lifetime. To see these images by Raphael and Titian, Veronese and Barocci, is suddenly to feel the full force and weight of the great tradition of the Old Masters.

In addition to reproductions of many renowned masterpieces, we are introduced to others, tucked away in provincial centers, that strike one with their revelatory brilliance. Except for these glorious illustrations, how many of us would have suspected the beauty of Lotto's *Virgin and Child with Saints* from Bergamo, that exquisite marriage of Titian and Correggio, in which two green-grey diagonals of saints and angels intersect in the scarlet robes of the Madonna? Or the thrillingly redemptive force of Fra Bartolomeo's resurrected Christ rising up on His pedestal, above the four saints who lurch into life, energized by Michelangelesque movement?

A love of the Old Masters is further served by one of the more worthy ventures in art-book publishing in recent years, Stewart, Tabori & Chang's massive, sumptuous tomes devoted to the major museums of the world. The first of these was *The Louvre*, published three years ago, in which several hundred of that collection's foremost masterworks were reproduced in superb color illustrations, each accompanied by a brief but pertinent paragraph of velutinous prose by Sir Lawrence Gowing, one of England's finest art historians.



After that came *The Musee d'Orsay*, devoted to the newly opened museum that faces the Louvre from across the Seine. Now comes ***Paintings in the Hermitage***, whose massive collections, stretching from Gothic to Matisse, have been minutely described by Colin Eisler. Eisler, in contrast to Gowing, has opted for a continuous, rather than an episodic, treatment of the works in this collection, and if this is not quite as conducive to study as the earlier work, the subject is less well known to the average traveler, and thus of more urgent interest. Among the masterworks beautifully reproduced are Cranach's lasciviously suave *Venus and Cupid*, Hans van Aachen's effetely mannered *Allegory of Peace*, Veronese's hectic and clamorous *Conversion of Saul*, and El Greco's noble half-length study of Saints Peter and Paul. One can only wish the publishers well in this venture, and hope that subsequent volumes will be devoted to Vienna's Kunsthistorisches Museum, the Prado in Madrid, the National Galleries in London and Washington, and New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art.

From Rizzoli come two excellent books whose illustrations bring sculpture and architecture to life, as the Cambridge edition of Burckhardt enlivened the paintings. The first book, ***Sculpture: The Great Art of the Middle Ages from the 5th to the 15th Century***, has been translated from the fine French of the eminent historian Georges Duby, and includes texts by Xavier Barral i Altet and Sophie Guillot de Suduiraut. Covering as it does the thousand years of sculptural history from the fall of Rome to the inception of the High Renaissance, this book could not possibly be detailed enough to satisfy anyone who already has a good acquaintance with the subject. Nevertheless, its coverage of all the major areas of its subject will make it a sturdy reference work, and it will introduce many to the excellences of what is apt to seem a dry and pallid subject. Something about the closeness and deep piety of this art makes it ideal for the cold, wintry days ahead. If Burckhardt's book breathes the heady exuberance of the Renaissance, the art carved with such exquisite care into the porous granite of Chartres, the alabaster of Burgundy, and the polychrome limewood of Nuremberg suggests the cloistral seclusion of the Middle Ages. Duby and his co-authors explore how the native traditions of the Germanic and Celtic tribes after the fall of Rome, with their spiraling bosses and interlocking labyrinths of serpents' tails, mingled with the traditions of high classicism to produce the barbarously raw and beautiful art of the early Middle Ages. Following fast upon the staid neo-classicism of the courts of Charlemagne and the Ottos, the sinuously twisting figures of Mois-

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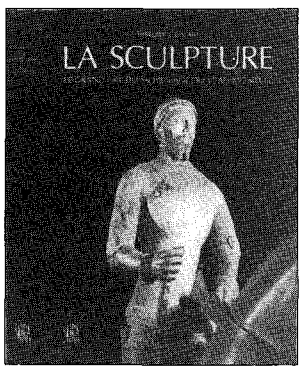
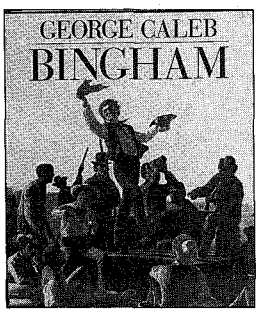
sac and Souillac seem all nervous distortion, and the lascivious depiction of Eve carved by Ghiselbertus over the trumeau of the Cathedral of Autun appears downright improper. Throughout Europe we see the Romanesque style expand and change, only to yield, in turn, to the far greater naturalism of the Gothic sculptures of Chartres, Claus Sluter's uncannily realistic statuary in Dijon, and the humanistic classicism implicit in Giovanni Pisano's pulpit in Pistoia.

RIZZOLI'S OTHER eminent book of the fall season is Alvise Zorzi's ***Venetian Palaces***. As the author makes clear in his lengthy introductory chapter, Venice, like Rome, represents a hodge-podge of styles piled atop the soggy wooden pikes of the Realtine Archipelago. Although Venice, founded in the fifth century of the Christian era, naturally possesses no remains from antiquity, one finds there eminent examples of most of the other periods, Byzantine, Gothic, Early Renaissance, High Classical, Baroque, and Rococo. Zorzi devotes a brief chapter to each of over fifty palaces, beginning with the sturdy utilitarianism of the Byzantine Fondaco dei Tedeschi, moving on to the prickly Gothic of the Cà d'Oro and then to the full-blown glory of the Ducal Palace on Saint Mark's Square, which John Ruskin, who did not like much, considered to be the most beautiful building in the world. In the 42 color illustrations devoted to this Palace, we become intimate with that famous pink and white façade riddled with crenelations and sculpted arches that proceed with the stately rhythm of a Scarlatti sonata. Through the perforated ogees, we witness the merging of the blue sky and bluer lagoon, as well as the lavish interior, awash with the murals of Tintoretto and Tiepolo.



From here we pass on to the Biblioteca Marciana, designed by Sansovino in gleaming Istrian marble, and the Cà Rezzonico, by the finest of Venetian Baroque architects, Baldassare Longhena. Zorzi's relatively brief descriptions, full of interesting anecdotal details, are just enough to satisfy the curiosity of the average lay reader. The only real complaint that can be leveled against the book's production is that the print is unjustified—that is, the lines do not all end at the same point on the page, which creates ungainly and irritating serration. Who can explain this extraordinary lapse of judgment? Nevertheless, it seems to be something of the style these days, and one can only wonder how it got started, or how long it will continue.



This past fall has seen the publication of some excellent books, not only about the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, but also about American and modern art. One of the best of these is ***George Caleb Bingham***, which the St. Louis Art Museum, in conjunction with Harry Abrams, brought out to coincide with an exhibition that appeared in Washington and elsewhere. The book, comprising essays by Paul Nagel, John Wilmerding, and three other scholars, is lavishly illustrated with those luminous works that make the artist one of the most authentic of American masters. By the time this eminent Missourian died in 1879, at the age of 68, he had lived to see America transformed from an agrarian to a largely industrialized society, the diverse regions of whose far-flung territory were connected by steamships and a complex web of railroads. His finest works, from a few years before and after 1850, are the swan song of a part of America that was passing away even before the paint dried upon his finely woven canvases. In *Canvassing the Vote*, *Verdict of the People*, and *County Politician*, Bingham has captured the lively novelty of civic association in the young Republic. Bingham was one of art history's few provincial geniuses. Even the most gifted provincials are usually superficial, and if they are geniuses, they tend to be seduced into yielding to the grand manner of the capital. Bingham has seen and studied the Old Masters, Gerrit Dou, the followers of Caravaggio, and so forth, and his paintings reflect this. Yet mercifully, and in spite of his best efforts to the contrary, he was never able to pass for the finely polished cosmopolitan artist he wanted to be. There is always something crude and gauche about these paintings, with their sharp, overly obvious chiaroscuro and fulgurant hues, resembling nothing else in the art of America or Europe.

Yet they have, in their own way, an extraordinary formal sophistication. Consider the finely felt ovals and triangulations of the group of four seated men in *Canvassing for a Vote*, which inadvertently possesses the elegance of Giotto, and which looks forward to the apples and flasks of Cézanne; or the dramatic Caravaggesque moodiness of the shadowy figures in *Captured by Indians*. Some of these works come close to sublimity. You can almost hear the stilled music of *The Jolly Bargeman*, in which a mercurial young man, suspended in mid-leap, his rainbow of garments aflame in the noonday sun, is accompanied by the joyous clapping and vociferations of his companions on a barge gliding down the broad river. Few images communicate meditative repose more effectively than *Fur Traders Descending the Missouri*, lazily motionless on the warm and shimmering turquoise waters.

IN CONTRAST to Bingham, nothing could be more sophisticated than the paintings of Claude Monet. A little under a hundred years ago, Monet was painting some of the most advanced images ever seen in Western art. His activity during the 1890s was devoted principally to his "series" paintings, in which he took a single subject—haystacks, poplars, or whatnot—and examined it from a variety of angles at different times of day and under shifting meteorological conditions, until he had succeeded in distilling from it the last essence of its poetry. One of the grandest of these series was devoted to Rouen Cathedral, which he painted more than two dozen times. Splendidly reproduced in ***Monet's Cathedral***, which has recently been published by Knopf with generous commentary by Joachim Pissaro, the canvases reveal an almost fantastical acuity of observation. The noble pile of Rouen, mas-

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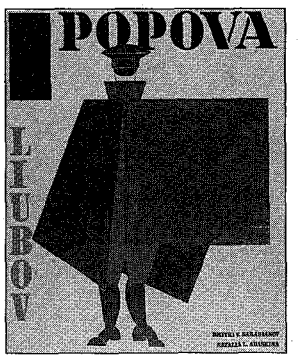
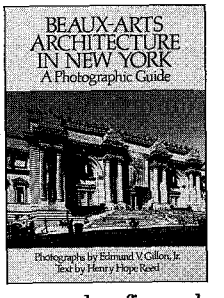
sively emerging out of the soil like some chthonic deity of the French countryside, garlanded with traceries and scarred by centuries of wind and rain, exudes an overwhelmingly sullen personality. These paintings are not so much cityscapes as portraits. They show us the ancient building in rain and sunlight, laced in the early morning with gleaming highlights of Naples yellow that consolidate into the slate blue of the early afternoon, before glittering into gold as the light of declining day floods the immemorial porches. Pissaro's commentary for each of these paintings is unabashedly formalist, although the long introductory section provides a very thorough sense of the historical circumstances in which the series was conceived and executed.



It is hard to imagine that Liubov Popova was a contemporary of Monet, and that her uncompromising forays into pure, cubistic form were coeval with the languid late-summer reveries of Monet's *Water Lilies*. For those with a taste for irony, few works could be more stimulating than Abrams's new monograph on this Russian avant-garde artist, ***Liubov Popova***. It is precisely the dullness of the prose, written by Soviet art-historians Dmitri V. Sarabianov and Natalia L. Adaskina, that makes it so fascinating a document. Speaking of "the spiral movement of the lines and bands that form the conical funnels and the cylinders," Sarabianov says that "this movement clears a path for itself, intersecting the color planes, changing their coloration along the way, and shoving the spiky acute angles, the crescent moons, the numerous small shapes to the edges." In other words, this is hard-core formalism of the most conservative and anti-Marxian kind imaginable. While art critics in the West have, with all too few exceptions, fallen like dominoes before the glamor of dialectical materialism, critics in the Soviet Union quietly churn out works of the most staid and conservative formalist analysis.

What is best about this book is its exhaustively thorough reproduction of this great lady's finest works, most of them in full color. The majority date from the years immediately before the Revolution. But they nevertheless recall to us those vertiginous first moments of the new dispensation, before the Stalinist crackdown. It was a time when the state allowed Russian artists, for the first and last time, the freedom to paint as they wished, thus bringing into being the first and last moment in which Russian artists would achieve anything of international importance. Liubov Popova's series of *Painterly Constructions* from 1920 possess a cyclonic restlessness and indiscriminate violence, drawing within their grasp elements of constructivism, fairy-tale images, and synthetic cubism. The real world of three dimensions is ever encroaching upon these august meditations on pure form. There is an aggressive and naïve love for shapes and color in these paintings, with their rich, deep tones and interlocking planes. Far more interesting than Sarabianov's unimpeachably acute formalist analysis is Natalia Adaskina's discussion, in the second half of the book, of the artist's theoretical researches, her work for the theater, her textile designs, and her friendships with many of the leading figures of the Russian avant-garde.



So far we have proceeded from the premise that the donor will like the person upon whom he bestows the art book he has selected. As it would be naïve to suppose that this will always be the case, and in the interests of covering all the bases, we heartily recommend Bob Colacello's incandescent new hagiography of Andy Warhol, *Holy Terror*, as the perfect stocking stuffer for that one person, be he relative or acquaintance, whom you simply cannot abide. Imagine the look of anguished chagrin on his face the moment he opens the wrapping paper and sees Blondie's all too familiar, voidoid expression staring back at him, and actually imagines that you think this is just the sort of thing he wants! The subtitle, *Andy Warhol Close Up*, suggests that the book will get down to brass tacks. In fact, it is really a rambling, inarticulate paean to the foremost mediocrity in history, extending through five hundred semiliterate pages:

> "Well, shall we go somplace [sic] for a nightcap?" Calvin Klein asked Halston.
>
> "Your place or mine?" asked Halston.
>
> We went to Halston's. When we arrived, Halston took Calvin and his new wife, Kelly, on a tour of the upper level, Bianca and Dick Cavett sat at one end of the huge living room discussing the Nicaraguan situation, Steve darted from group to group, and Andy, Paige and I sat at the other end, not knowing what to talk about.

Multiply that five thousand times, and you get the idea of the book. Strictly for the cultist.

THOUGH MOST of the books discussed so far have been a bit on the expensive side, we have Dover Books to thank for bringing us, for over thirty years now, some very fine paperbacks that are miracles of economy. The long suit of this publishing house seems to be drawings, etchings, wood-cuts, prints, and old photographs that reproduce very well in black and white. These durable and beautiful editions are especially to be admired for bringing to a larger public out-of-print rarities that a bigger company would not consider sufficiently profitable to be in its interest. Notable among these are Aubrey Beardsley's illustrated version of ***The Rape of the Lock*** by Alexander Pope, H. Arthur Klein's ***The Graphic Worlds of Peter Bruegel the Elder***, and Goya's ***Los Caprichos*** and ***The Horrors of War***. Also very useful is ***Beaux-Arts Architecture in New York***, with fine photographs by Edmund Gillon Jr. and omniscient commentary by Henry Hope Reed. All are under ten dollars.

It will have occurred to some readers to want to give a book to a child. The only risk one runs is that the child is apt to think he is being punished, or that some perverse kind of joke is being played on him. But if he already has his arsenal of skate boards, if his taste for mutant turtles has reached such a point of satiety that he can no longer see the color green without experiencing queasiness, then it may be time to introduce him to Janson's ***History of Art for Young People***, written by the late art

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historian in conjunction with his son. This covers most of the material in the larger, collegiate Janson, which has been for almost two generations the cornerstone of art pedagogy in this country. Without talking down to its young readers, this book will provide them with what may be their first exposure to some of the great monuments of Western art, the Parthenon, Chartres, the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, and the Stanzas of Raphael, together with the violent images of Caravaggio, the introspective masterpieces of Rembrandt, the dramas of Bernini, and the High Classicism of David, down through the Impressionists to the revolutions of our own time. It's all there, presented with surprising thoroughness in clear, mellifluous prose. In general, buying art books for children is easier than one might think, because the young ones seem to go for bright colors and thrilling imagery, which is precisely what the publishers are most apt to traffic in. If, however, it was indeed your intention to punish the child in question, then we might suggest *The Severe Style in Greek Sculpture*, by Brunilde Sismondo Ridgway, or better still, Rudolf Witkower's remarkably thorough *Architectural Principles in the Age of Humanism*. □

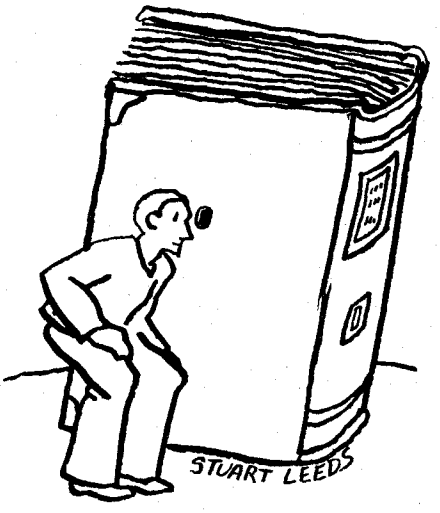
Measures of Devotion

PAUL HUBBARD

THE CIVIL WAR was a tragedy of many faces. It was a brothers' war. Two of Senator John J. Crittenden's sons were general officers, one in the Union army, the other in the Confederate. Henry Clay, the great compromiser, had three grandsons in the Federal forces and four in the Rebel. Regrettable as death in battle may be, we are fascinated by the terrible bloodshed of the conflict: out of a population of 29 million, some 500,000 Americans died in the war—1.7 per cent of the entire population. A proportionate number of deaths in 1990—4.25 million—is unimaginable. We feel a thrill of horror when we contemplate 23,000 dead and wounded on the field at Antietam at the close of one day's battle.

Then, too, there is the inexpressible futility we sense in accounts of the struggle. For despite the triumph of the Union, the great moral aim of the conflict would remain unmet. Against the war's glorious legacy—a vast nation soon to become the envy of the world—there is the tragedy of four million blacks still generations away from true freedom. "Once let the black man get upon his person the brass letters, 'U.S.' . . . and a musket on his shoulder," said Frederick Douglass, "and there is no power on earth which can deny that he has earned the right to citizenship." True to these words, black men in the 54th Massachusetts regiment begged to lead the suicidal assault on Battery Wagner, thinking that if they died as soldiers they would be accepted as the white man's equals. But it was not to be. The war united the states but not the races.

If there were any doubts that the war retains its powerful pull on our emotions, they were disposed of by PBS's 12-hour documentary *The Civil War*, produced by the brothers Ric and Ken Burns, and the companion volume of the same name. Both are masterly works and engage the interest not only of students of war but, to judge by the ratings, millions familiar with the events only through the textbooks of their school years. Another study, Robert Leckie's ***None Died in Vain***, has not drawn quite the same interest but attests to the same ongoing fascination with the personalities and dramas of the rebellion.



Powerful and haunting as the TV series was, it cannot fully substitute for the book version, ***The Civil War: An Illustrated History***, by Geoffrey C. Ward with the Burnses. Here one can pore over the illustrations and note every detail, gaze into the thousands of faces and ponder the thoughts and fears they reflect, read and re-read the poignant letters written by soldiers and their loved ones, some barely literate, others profoundly beautiful. Altogether there are five hundred pictures, paintings, and lithographs, including some rare ones that not even veteran historians will recognize. In addition to the authors' well-written narrative, they have called on four distinguished historians—Barbara Fields, Don Fehrenbacher, James McPherson, and C. Vann Woodward—for interpretive essays. And Ken Burns interviews historian Shelby Foote, who enthralled viewers of the documentary with his commentaries, at once witty and moving.

Mr. Leckie's book, a "saga" in which he enlarges upon the Civil War portion of his comprehensive *Wars of America*, would probably have received more attention had it not coincided with the Burnses' more ambitious project. Still, it is the product of enormous research and gives excellent background for the broader historical currents of the period. Mr. Leckie mentions, for instance, General Beauregard's spy network in Washington but fails to name the network's principal spy; Ward and the Burnses, more oriented toward detail, tell us that she was Rose O'Neal Greenhow. Where Ward and the Burnses open with the murder of abolitionist Elijah Lovejoy by a pro-slavery mob in 1837, Leckie begins with the Mexican War and a portrait of America at midcentury. *None Died in Vain* ends with the hanging of the Lincoln conspirators, *The Civil War* with the fiftieth reunion of veterans of Gettysburg.

But despite differences in scope and emphasis, both reject the view of some modern scholars that slavery was but a surface issue concealing the economic tensions that really caused the war. True, as he came to the Presidency Lincoln said that slave states need not fear for their peculiar institu-

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RIGHT BOOKS

■ MAN FOR THE JOB. The history books routinely dismiss Ulysses S. Grant as a no-account President and his Administration as among the most corrupt and mediocre—a harsh yet just verdict. As with other rare men, including the President he had served during the Civil War, his gifts seemed to require a huge crisis fully to reveal themselves.

Reading Grant's *Memoirs* one quickly learns what his rarest gift was. He was a man devoid of all pretense. As clear about his strengths as about his limits—and those of other men—he had self-confidence but not the least trace of self-importance. In other men, Union and Confederate, the great crisis stirred a frenzied mix of emotions—anger, fear, despair, wounded pride, intoxicating ambition. In Grant it aroused just one emotion: a grim resolve to get the job done. Though an unimposing, unpolished figure, he was the very last man you would want to meet in any test of will. Grant, as the mesmeric Shelby Foote put it, had what his men called "four-o'clock-in-the-morning courage": you could wake him at that hour and tell him the enemy was a half-mile away—and he would know what to do. He had, in short, all the valor and chivalry of the South's more decorous generals, with none of their tragic self-delusion.

Scratched out on a pad by a man recently defrauded, broke, and now dying of cancer, *Memoirs* has a detachment and modesty one doesn't expect in reminiscences of the eminent. One can see why it appealed so much to its first publisher, Mark Twain. "I was not studious in habit, and probably did not make progress enough to compensate for the outlay for board and tuition," Grant says of his grade-school days. As for West Point, he had never given it a thought until one day, he recalls, his father summarily presented the plan and all but handed him his bags: "Besides the argument that my father used in favor of my going to West Point—that 'he thought I would go'—there was another very strong inducement. I had always a great desire to travel." Even so, "the military life had no charms for me," and while classmates like Lee were gaining early distinction we find the man they would later call U.S. ("Unconditional Surrender") Grant lounging about the library reading novels.

We next find him in the Mexican War—a shameless provocation, Grant writes, "to acquire territory out of which slave states might be formed." But the soldiers were brave even if the cause was wrong and the triumphs hollow, he reflects: "I would not have the anniversaries of our victories celebrated, nor those of our defeats made fast days. . . . but I would like to see truthful history written."

When the rebellion came, Grant, by then a failed salesman and real-estate agent, put in for service with an Illinois regiment (though only after trying to volunteer at the headquarters of Major General George McClellan, who was too busy to bother with such nuisances). From Fort Donelson to Vicksburg to Shiloh to Richmond, we find Grant observing the same principle: pursue now, whatever the costs, to avert even greater losses later on. Or as he put it in a cable: "Wherever the enemy goes let our troops go also."

In his first engagement as commander of the U.S. Army he lost 17,000 men by nightfall. The survivors, accustomed to McClellan's chronic abulia at such moments, assumed he would call retreat. But after a night during which he is said to have wept, Grant gave the signal for pursuit. A soldier wrote: "For the first time, we felt the boss had arrived."

—MATTHEW SCULLY

■ SHOOTING STAR. W. T. Sherman's *Memoirs* are notable in part for what the author left out, and a chief virtue of the new Library of America edition is its inclusion of a detailed year-by-year chronology of Sherman's life.

WTS doesn't tell us that he was born Tecumseh (Mencken wrote that Sherman's wife always called him Cump); that "William" was added at his Catholic baptism when he was ten. He does tell us that upon his father's death, his mother, near penniless and unable to care for ten children, had to "scatter" all but the three youngest. Cump went to live with the family of Thomas Ewing. It was Mrs. Ewing who arranged his baptism; Mr. Ewing, Ohio's junior senator, arranged his appointment to West Point, about which Sherman knew little, "except that it was very strict, and . . . the army was its natural consequence." He graduated in 1840 and spent the next 13 years in uniform, serving at posts in several Southern cities, and in northern California during the Mexican War. After he quit the army, he tried and failed at banking in San Francisco, St. Louis, and New York. In '58 he and two of the Ewings' sons started a law firm in Kansas. (WTS had not been an attorney, had not formally studied law, but was admitted to the bar "on the ground of general intelligence.") In '59 he became founding superintendent of what is now LSU. Then came the war.

"I gave no heed to the political excitement of the day," Sherman writes, and vigorously apolitical he was. Not only did he avoid presidential politics (to the '84 Republican convention: "I will not accept if nominated and will not serve if elected"), he voted for President only once—in '56 for Buchanan. But in letters to his brother John, a congressman and later senator (he of the Sherman Antitrust Act), he admonished against anti-slavery pronouncements in Congress. And politics clearly intruded in other quite personal ways. For instance, he built a house in Louisiana, "but prudently had not sent for my family . . . because of the storm that was lowering heavy on the political horizon." In fact, his abolitionist wife (a Ewing) refused to bring their children south. WTS thought Southerners entitled to their human property, and would later oppose the enlistment of blacks in the Union army, but he thought secession intolerable, and, after turning down several commissions (which led to speculation in Washington that he might join the Confederacy), he became again Colonel Sherman, 13th U.S. Infantry, on May 14, 1861. He got his first-ever taste of combat at Bull Run.

War. "It is all hell," and it nearly drove him mad. He does not record it, but he became a drunk and, relieved of his first command, suicidal. But, with U.S. Grant as his angel, he endured, distinguished himself at Shiloh, and burned down his first Southern town in the fall of 1862. Vicksburg, Chattanooga, Missionary Ridge, Atlanta, and then the March to the Sea: ten miles a day, scorching a path fifty miles wide. Total war, and then victory.

He remained in the army for another two decades, most of it as commanding general. If the *Memoirs* were a highlight of his later years, the low point may have been his son Tom's decision to become a priest, although they were reconciled, and the son officiated at the father's funeral in 1891.

Sherman's *Memoirs* present a riskier America: ships sank, banks failed, children died. WTS had the heart of a warrior, the mind of an accountant. He was reading *Great Expectations* when he died. Tecumseh is Shawnee for Shooting Star.

—BRAD MINER

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tion. But in his mind and the minds of those who fought and died, slavery was the issue. Lincoln was prepared to tolerate the institution only where it already existed, with the expectation that it would, in time, pass away. But he would not allow it to spread further, and this, both books contend, was the decisive point.

One is left wondering whether slavery would in fact have passed away. What if the Southern fire-eaters had not pressed the issue to the point of secession and had spared us the bitter legacy of war? Would the increasingly archaic institution of slavery have died a natural death by the century's end? Such questions only make our sense of loss in studying the war that much deeper. □

The Excellent Tradition

M. D. AESCHLIMAN

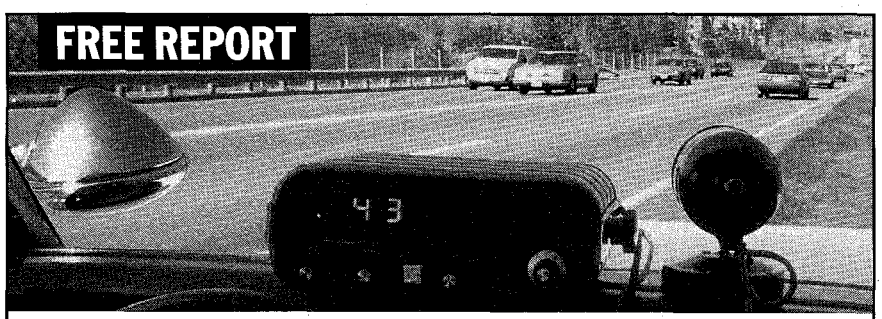
ALTHOUGH he could not finish his studies there because of poverty, Dr. Johnson later remarked that Oxford University was "a monument to the excellence of the Christian tradition." The beautifully produced ***Oxford Illustrated History of Christianity*** is also such a monument. To be sure, the evidence regarding the present and future health of the excellent tradition is mixed and ambiguous, as a glance at Bryan Wilson's essay on secularization readily shows. "The essence of modernity," Daniel Bell has remarked, "is that nothing is sacred," and this pervasive desacralization is immensely powerful in all Western countries, and indeed throughout the world.

Yet the historical view of reality fostered by this volume gives reason for hope, if not for optimism; hope that Judaeo-Christian "logocentrism" can still, in the words of T. S. Eliot, "renew and rebuild civilization, and save the world from suicide." Now that Marxism is everywhere in decline (everywhere but in the humanities and social-science departments of our universities), the other great antagonist has emerged more prominently: the libertarian nihilism pioneered most notably by Nietzsche, and championed by Ayn Rand and more recently by the chic literary deconstructionists. This may well be *the* "cultural contradiction of capitalism" about which such sensitive observers as Daniel Bell, Hilton Kramer, and the late Malcolm Muggeridge have written: that, in the name of "self-expression" and "liberation," it generates an intellectual despair and a culture of glitzy, contemptible, and absurd rubbish.

This beautifully illustrated volume has separate chapters on the history of Christianity by eminent scholars such as the Chadwick brothers and Basil Mitchell, whose fine essay on "The Christian Culture" reminds one in its judicious orthodoxy of his great short work *Morality: Religious and Secular* (1981). The coverage of Christianity as a world religion is outstanding, especially the essay on Latin America by Frederick Pike of Notre Dame. Martin Marty's beautifully organized discussion of Christianity in North America should impress even those who may disagree with parts of it.

There is throughout the book a genial tolerance and nuanced comprehension of the varieties of Christian belief and practice throughout the ages and across the map. Nonetheless, the importance of orthodoxy is also stressed, notably in Basil Mitchell's essay, with its outstandingly chosen illustrations

Mr. Aeschliman is a lecturer in English literature at the University of Virginia.



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from twentieth-century art, documenting contemporary rootlessness, confusion, and absurdism, and contrasting with the humanizing art of the classical-Christian centuries. Like his mentor, C. S. Lewis, Mitchell lucidly defends logocentrism—the "continuing insistence upon morality as flowing from the nature of things rather than as a construction of the human mind." As the recent career and thinking of that other moralist, Alasdair MacIntyre, may indicate, our choice is ultimately between the baptized Aristotle of the Judaeo-Christian Natural Law tradition and the various Nietzschean demoralizers, whether "radical" or "libertarian."

This long Judaeo-Christian tradition, with all the conflict and conversation within it, is beautifully described and explained in this volume. Christianity's capacity to sustain and transmit the vision of "decent Godly order," in which most human sanity down the ages has been rooted, is surely problematic, but another lesson of this volume is that it has always been problematic. In Gertrude Himmelfarb's magnificent essay "From Clapham to Bloomsbury: A Genealogy of Morals," Miss Himmelfarb describes the tragic nineteenth-century transition from the earnest, moral, Protestant world of the English Victorians to the kinky aesthetic nihilism of Bloomsbury—essentially the transition from an ethical to an aesthetic view of reality. The Bloomsbury "liberation"—from "the importance of being earnest"—gives us a world in which there is nothing obligatory or of ultimate value that is anterior, exterior, or superior to the unique self. Three-quarters of a century after their heyday, the anarchic immoralism of Oscar Wilde, J. M. Keynes, E. M. Forster, Virginia Woolf, and Lytton Strachey has ceased to be only a minority pursuit of leisured and depraved bohemian sophisticates, and has become a mass-consumer phenomenon.

To it the residual momentum of Judaeo-Christian "logocentrism," so contemptuously assaulted in the academy, ignored in the media, undermined in the marketplace, is the West's only means of restoring sanity. That this tradition is spurned or crucified over and over again by transgressive nihilism may only be proof that it is being loyal to its Lord. This magnificent Oxford history is testimony to the durability and beauty of this Godly tradition, as well as to its rightness. Not only a beautiful art object, this book is a spiritual vademecum as well. □

THEATER

Joyous Noël

HERB GREER

I ONCE HEARD Kenneth Tynan tell a joke (which he admitted stealing from George Jean Nathan) about the Noël Coward school of comedy. He remarked that this species of theater is like a game of billiards with a perfectly felted table, exquisitely polished cues, and no balls.

As always, Tynan was being fashionable. At the time he exhumed that squib (which is *ben trovato* but totally false), it was terribly chic—in fact, radically chic theatrically—to mock Coward and his plays. In Britain, at least, that sort of silliness did not survive for long, and even Tynan himself eventually revived Coward at the National Theater. In more recent seasons London's West End has seen revivals of the old master's work attract audiences and make them as happy as ever they did in the Thirties and Forties. Coward's status as a classic is now so well established that some London critics, far from knocking his work, use its excellence as a criterion to knock the actors who perform it.

Which is what happened in the latest London revival of *Private Lives* at the Aldwych. Coward wrote the play for himself and Gertrude Lawrence, and later described it as "a reasonably well-constructed dialogue for two experienced performers, with a couple of extra puppets thrown in to assist the plot and to provide contrast." The plot, such as it is, begins on "the terrace of a hotel in France" with an encounter between two brittle lovers, Elyot and Amanda, who have divorced and each re-married, to Sybil and Victor, respectively. At the end of the first act Elyot and Amanda, still madly in love, desert their new spouses and decamp together to Amanda's Paris flat. Here they chatter, sing, and quarrel. Sybil and Victor pursue them there, entering in the midst of a knock-down-and-drag-out battle between Elyot and Amanda which brings down the second-act curtain. After some well-bred argy-bargy in the third act, Sybil and Victor in their turn bicker and then attack each other quite fiercely, as Elyot and Amanda escape together, carrying suitcases.

The Aldwych production of this rice-paper play was designed as a vehicle to roll Joan Collins out of the confected, speciously glamorous existence of *Dynasty*-style television and back into the world of legitimate theater, where Art and Prestige lurk for those who have the strength and talent to grasp them. After the curtain rose, two things rapidly became very clear: first, control of such a vehicle as *Private Lives* requires the finely honed skills and reflexes of a formula-one racing driver; second, Miss Collins, although glossily enameled and lovely in her Antoinette Gregory gowns and pyjamas, belonged in the back seat of a Ford Escort. Her co-lead, Keith Baxter, might in a pinch have been the chauffeur, provided he stuck to quiet suburban streets. He was stiff, leathery in looks, and deployed a husky voice that tended to dull the edge of Coward's brittle dialogue.

While Miss Collins and Mr. Baxter bobbed woodenly about the stage with strings on their fingers and toes, the "extra puppets" accomplished the extraordinary feat of turning the play upside down. Coward certainly intended them to be "little better than ninepins . . . only there at all to be repeatedly knocked down and stood up again." But, as played by Edward Duke and a delightful young actress called Sara Crowe, they came to life, like Pinocchio, and proved to be extremely funny and attractive characters, far more lively and better written than the playwright supposed.

The production upset some of the "serious" weekend newspaper critics. John Peter of the London *Sunday Times* was very snooty about the evening's violation of what he describes as Coward's "Englishness"; Mr. Peter

Mr. Greer writes from London about culture for The World & I.

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(who by the way is Hungarian) seems to have longed for the exquisite cut-glass style and accents associated with *Private Lives* as played by Coward himself. It is true enough that the speech of Miss Collins and Mr. Baxter had less to do with cut glass than with a sort of beveled plastic. But, given the excellent help they received from Miss Crowe and Mr. Duke, this did not spoil the evening altogether. Michael Coveney of *The Observer* was relatively ferocious; he dismissed the whole show as "unspeakably crass" and "common." His supercilious disapproval calls to mind a story told by the famous critic James Agate, who, writing on the play's premiere, mentioned its "butterfly" quality; years later he disavowed this, noting:

> I saw this play a month or two ago performed in a wooden hut somewhere in Sussex to an audience not, one thinks, appreciative of butterflies. The piece had been broadened a little and what texture there was left was that of a flea-bitten hunter's hide. And it brought the roof down, and everybody voted it to be tremendous fun, and, during the row on the sofa, the audience stamped and whistled, and shouted, "Go to it, Elyot," "Slosh 'im, Amanda!" I find that in 1930 I talked of this play's "world-weary banter." I ought to have had my brains taken out and buttered and given to a dog.

Perhaps that has happened to Mr. Coveney already; in spite of Miss Collins's undergraduate playing and the starchiness of her leading man, both of them managed (with formidable help from Coward's script) to be funny quite a lot of the time. They did not broaden the play so much as make their part of it a bit less shiny. Miss Collins (on the first night, and one must allow for that) repeatedly mistimed, and thus flattened, dialogue which should have gotten laughs; Mr. Baxter actually barked the play's most famous and splendid line—"There are certain women who should be struck regularly, like gongs"—into the midst of someone else's laugh, and so lost it. Nevertheless, like the players in that Sussex hut, this Elyot and Amanda did dispense a decent share of amusement, and were able to get through the evening without boring the audience or making us chuckle for the wrong reasons.

While these sincere fumblings were going on, Miss Crowe and Mr. Duke romped through their parts with superb abandon, and happily proceeded to steal the play and run away with it tucked firmly under their arms. The tall, dark, and moustached Mr. Duke huffed and puffed tweedily, and brought off the delicate feat of being a truly entertaining stuffed shirt.

Miss Crowe, on the other hand, is one of those rare performers who can walk onto a stage with the most evanescent material, and use it to break up an audience. Her performance was a sample of that delicious and prime species of comedy which draws sudden laughter from lines that would be sterile and ordinary on anyone else's tongue. From the very first scene it was obvious that she was going to dominate the evening. Her Sybil was blonde, blue-eyed, and flighty, but did not pull faces, or wiggle her bottom, or get up to any of the other physical stunts which belong on the variety

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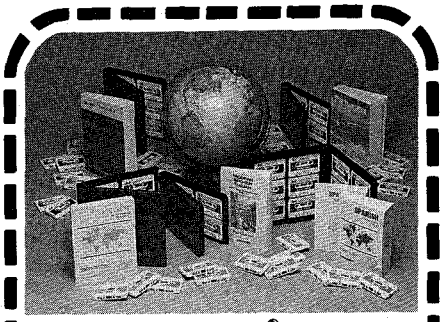
Wild at Heart is a cul-de-sac of a road movie in which nothing leads anywhere or makes the barest minimum of sense.

—John Simon



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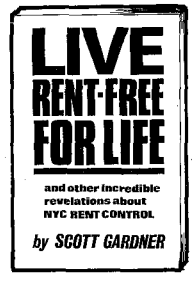

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RANDOM NOTES

■ MAX'S XMAS. James Gardner has highlighted a few of the season's best art books, but surely some of us, although we willingly acknowledge the beauty of the books Mr. Gardner recommends, will not care to give them at Christmas—not to Uncle Maxwell anyway. Uncle Max must be bought for (always at the last minute), but Uncle Max cares for your paintings and your sculptures not at all. Still, Max does love to read. Every night he repairs to the den, there to read, drink, and smoke. (We think he thinks he's Churchill.) Heaven knows he's hard to buy for; books are the perfect gift, if we only knew *which* books. We ask long-suffering Aunt Alice, and she advises, "No pictures and no conversations." So other than art books and novels, what's out there?

History, that "race between education and catastrophe" (H. G. Wells), is always the best bet; and biography, which Carlyle maintained is history at its best. The most celebrated history book of the year is *The Civil War*, reviewed in this issue by Paul Hubbard. In "Right Books," Matt Scully and I present the memoirs of Grant and Sherman (which, by the way, are available in a boxed set for $70). Two other notable books about the Civil War period are ***The Road to Disunion: Secessionists at Bay, 1776-1854***, by Johns Hopkins professor William W. Freehling, and ***The Lees of Virginia: Seven Generations of An American Family***, by Paul C. Nagel, head of the Virginia Historical Society. Both books present the "lushly various" South (Professor Freehling's phrase).

If the War between the States was America's most wrenching conflict, World War II was the most all-consuming. On more than one occasion I've made mention of the upsurge in books about WWII, which will become a flood beginning December 7, 1991. A number of one-volume histories of the war have been published, and the best of them is just out: ***The Great Crusade: A New Complete History of the Second World War***, by H. P. Willmott. Mr. Willmott is a lecturer at Sandhurst, Britain's West Point. His concision is remarkable; his commentary illuminating. One memorable sentence: "Expounded at various parts of this text is the view that the German military genius was in fighting, not in war . . ." Another one-volume history is ***Memoirs of the Second World War***, by Winston S. Churchill. This is a reissue of the condensed version of the six-volume work that won its author the Nobel Prize for Literature, and which Uncle Max already owns (the Churchill books, not the Nobel). The *look* of the war is stunningly captured in two books: ***Life: World War II***, and ***The U.S. Army in World War II: A Pictorial Record***. The *Life* volume contains many of the most famous photographs that magazine published during the war. The second work is actually a three-volume set compiled by the United States Army's Center of Military History, and originally published in 1951. These pictures were taken by the army's own photographers, not by hotshot photojournalists. Telling images: the first Americans in Britain wearing doughboy helmets; several pages later, a shot of a black sergeant receiving directions from a Bobby carries the caption, "By the end of June [1942] there was a total of 140,656 Negro personnel in the European Theater . . . The M1 helmet worn by the sergeant . . . replaced the earlier M1917A1 helmet shown in preceding pictures." History is in the details.

But the work of history published this year that is likely to have the greatest impact and longevity is ***The Russian Revolution***, by Richard Pipes. From the antecedents of upheaval at the turn of the century through the emergence of state terror in the 1920s, Professor Pipes tells the story in a manner that can only be described as monumental. My favorite sentence: "In the meantime, Lenin, in his rural hideaway, was busy redesigning the world." His successors have gone back to the drawing board.

If a big, juicy biography is what your Uncle Max has atop his list, consider Sally Bedell Smith's ***In All His Glory: The Life of William S. Paley***. No book this year is being talked about (nay, shouted about) as much as this biography of the founder of CBS. A neat one-sentence description of Mrs. Smith's view of her subject: "Paley became an expert in the art of seduction." If a literary biography is in order, the best is Brian Boyd's ***Vladimir Nabokov: The Russian Years***. A second volume, *The American Years*, will be published next year. Mr. Boyd captures the spirit of an artist in the making: "Nabokov's frequent absences did little to endear him to his teachers." One has the eerie sense Mr. Boyd *received* his book via dictation from Nabokov, who died in 1977. Herman Wouk's *The Caine Mutiny Court-Martial* is at least a minor classic of the American theater, which makes an all-Chinese production of the play, in Beijing and in Chinese, seem odd. Odder still is that the American director spoke no Chinese, but it's all nicely explained by Charlton Heston in his ***Beijing Diary***. He writes: "It seemed like a good idea at the time."

Then there are the classics. In *NR*'s Fall Books issue [Oct. 15], I mentioned a new edition of ***The Brothers Karamazov*** just out from North Point Press. Similarly new and fresh is Robert Fagles's poetic translation of ***The Iliad*** of Homer. You can buy other fine hardcover editions of the classics by looking for the books published by Modern Library and, of course, Library of America. The Modern Library ***Moby Dick*** has illustrations by Rockwell Kent, whereas Library of America's edition also includes ***Redburn*** and ***White-Jacket***.

And if you are buying for kids . . . well, you're lucky. This may be the best year ever for children's books. The best I've seen are notable for illustrations so luminous and arresting as to change what I thought I knew about the genre. ***Puss 'n' Boots*** is the classic Charles Perrault tale of quick-wittedness; illustrated by Fred Marcellino, it *lives* in a way fairytales often don't in our day. ***Dinosaur Dream***, written and illustrated by Dennis Nolan, will enchant every little paleontologist who reads it. And Roberto Innocenti's illustrations for Charles Dickens's ***A Christmas Carol*** are as stunning as the work of Messrs. Marcellino and Nolan. Like General Sherman, I love no writer more than Dickens, and none of his stories more than the conversion of Ebenezer Scrooge.

Finally, let's not forget Aunt Alice, who seems ever in the kitchen at Yuletide. I know she'll like ***The Christmas Cookie Book***, by Judy Knipe and Barbara Marks. Not for nothing is your intrepid correspondent acknowledged by the authors as the happy holiday equivalent of a lab rat. The aroma of Alice's cookies may even overwhelm the smell of Max's cigars, and Merry Christmas to all and to all a good read.

—BRAD MINER

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stage. The wide, round face was usually bright, hopeful, and pleased, except when the part required it to crumple into tears. The voice was light and eager, placed somewhere between a chirp and a thin whoop, and when it was funny, the effect came without visible effort.

Sara Crowe replaced the blank little Sybil of Coward's imagination with another, more substantial creature, gurgling and sublimely silly, inspiring not just hilarity but affectionate, roaring approval from the Aldwych audience. More than anyone else in the cast, she made the difference between an evening that was just all right and one that was full of refreshing juice and joy. Whatever one might say about Miss Collins and her very late and awkward return to the London theater, she deserves thanks and a cheer for bringing this wonderful young comedienne onto the stage and—generously—letting her keep the limelight. □

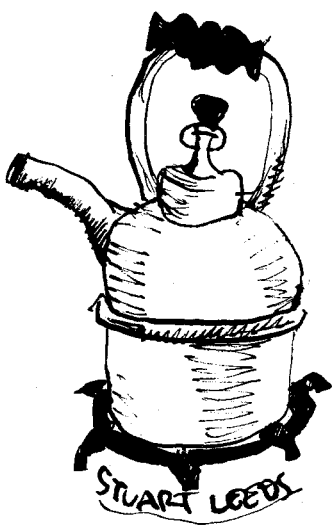
DELECTATIONS

A Scandal in Monte Porzio

NIKA HAZELTON

AMONG THE numerous invitations to wine tastings I receive—many of them pointlessly emblazoned with warnings that the information in them is urgent and should be printed immediately—one folder stands out in its simplicity. It is printed on a white rather than a dark background, and, in a few lines of blue type, it advertises Fontana Candida, the light, sophisticated wine of Rome. Inside, too, the copy is held to a minimum, and the whole thing is pleasingly designed. Receiving this folder reminded me of the time, when I was in Rome several years ago, that I was taken to the small town of Monte Porzio, about 15 miles out of Rome, to see the wine made, which in turn reminded me of an incident that had occurred there when I was a little girl.

My uncle Mario, with whom I frequently stayed when my parents were traveling, was then the mayor of Monte Porzio. He had prospered with his vines and olives, and he was looking forward to becoming a member of Parliament in due course. Like all Italians at that time he was a Catholic, and unlike many he was a good one: he went to Mass every Sunday; he confessed regularly; and he frequently entertained the clergy at his table. As he was also a good mayor, he was universally respected in Monte Porzio.



But his elder son, Nicola, was a different kettle of fish. He was bad, very bad, and the following incident did not help his reputation. One Sunday, Nicola came home for the noontime dinner as drunk as a coot. The scene was especially embarrassing because Uncle Mario was entertaining a distinguished guest from Rome.

Furthermore, as we learned later, before returning home Nicola had scandalized all Monte Porzio by standing in the church square, loudly singing nasty and extremely lewd songs, and making obscene gestures, so that the faithful, emerging from Mass, did not know where to look. A priest, witnessing the whole incident, said he would have thrown the boy out of the square if he had caught him in time.

Meanwhile, when Nicola turned up at the paternal table, Uncle Mario immediately ordered him to go upstairs and rest, and then to take a cold shower. When he had done so, Uncle Mario told him to explain himself.

For once, Nicola was thoroughly

Mrs. Hazelton, an NR *contributing editor, is the author of* Ups and Downs: Memoirs of Another Time.

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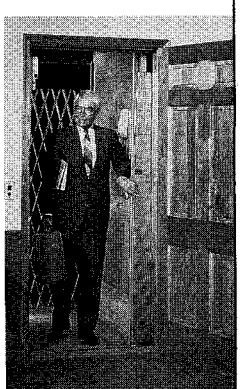

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NEW AGE, OLD ERRORS

A Mass dedicated to the memory of Fulton J. Sheen will be held at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, December 6, 1990, at the Church of Saint Agnes, 143 East 43rd Street, New York City. **George William Rutler** will deliver the homily: "The New Age. The Old Mistakes."

The Mass is being organized by the newly formed **Fulton J. Sheen Society**, which is dedicated to the propagation of Christianity through the mass media.

The Society will undertake the biannual reissue of one of Archbishop Sheen's more than seventy books, and will sponsor a yearly lecture, the first to be given in April by author **Paul Johnson**.

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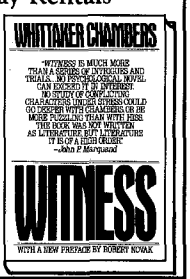

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frightened by his own behavior—not least because an educated male of that time would rather have died than be seen drunk. No, he said, he had not snitched his father's dinner wine (which nonetheless, ever after, was kept locked up instead of standing on the dining-room table). But, hemming and hawing, he finally confessed that he had emptied the very large bottle of wine that the lazy sacristan kept hidden in the vestment locker and used to refill the Offertory bottle for the next Mass, instead of going to fetch a fresh bottle each time. And how had Nicola gained admission to the sacristy? By flattering the sacristan and expressing interest in the vestments.

The upshot of the affair was that the nearby school of Mondragone would not take Nicola back. Instead, much to the delight of Monte Porzio, he was sent to Arezzo, where the Jesuits ran the toughest school in Italy. □

BOOKS IN BRIEF

Five Star Folk Art: One Hundred American Masterpieces, selected by Jean Lipman, Robert Bishop, Elizabeth V. Warren, and Sharon L. Eisenstat (Harry N. Abrams, 176 pp., $39.95)

DESPITE the glitzy title and ill-defined "folk" label, this superb collection of color plates redefines what is most American in American art, and includes an essay by Jean Lipman that is a model of sensitive definition. Besides such "old masters" of the genre as Erastus Fields, John Kane, and Horace Pippin, there are sculptors in wood whose genius is a revelation, notably Reuben Spalding, whose design for a flying machine improves on Leonardo, and the two anonymous carvers who produced "The Preacher," who preaches without opening his mouth, and "The Newsboy," who almost leaps off the page. An Amish quilt by Leah Zook Hertzler (c. 1900) would surely have won the admiration of Jackson Pollock. These are works with *style*, on which subject hear William Edmondson, an illiterate gravestone carver of Nashville: "God keeps me busy. The work ain't got much style. God don't want much style. But He gives you wisdom and speeds you along."

—SELDEN RODMAN

HART

(Continued from page 44)

conservative, perhaps, but not exclusively so. Its members include, for example, Yale's Dean Donald Kagan, and Jeane Kirkpatrick. It publishes an intellectually valuable quarterly called *Academic Questions*. The NAS declares itself to be "committed to rational discourse as the foundation of academic life in a free and democratic society."

The Duke chapter of the NAS has attracted substantial faculty support. It was organized by James Barber, a distinguished professor of political science, famous for his "profiles" of presidential emotional patterns. Professor Barber is a liberal, as are many of the professors who have joined the new chapter.

Enter Stanley Fish, chairman of the Duke English Department. He is a fairly large fish in contemporary literary criticism, the exponent of a virtually complete subjectivism in the reading of literary works. What the critic thinks a poem means is what it means. *Hamlet* could well be about the World Series. (Metaphysically, this cannot be excluded. Practically speaking, it can be.)

According to this fishy theory of knowledge, a critic can say anything he thinks, regardless of evidence. Thus Professor Fish greeted the formation of a National Association of Scholars chapter at Duke with a letter to the campus newspaper, *The Chronicle*, which referred to the new chapter as a "clandestine" faculty group.

But that was only Fish's opening shot. Riding an epistemological whirlwind, he writes that the NAS "is widely known to be racist, sexist, and homophobic." Of course, this is a lie. But it is consistent with Stanley Fish's theory of knowledge, which holds that there is no objective and checkable truth.

If Stanley Fish thinks that *Hamlet* is about the World Series, well, that is the subjective truth. If Stanley Fish thinks that the NAS is "racist, sexist, and homophobic," well, that is true in Stanley Fish's definition of truth.

The initial and founding members of the Duke NAS chapter number some fifty Duke faculty members, many of them distinguished nationally. They may yet save Duke from its investment in Stanley fish-heads. □

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Solution to Last Issue's Trans-O-Gram

CHARLES KESLER:

What Is Needed

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Literary

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(Continues on page 60)

CLASSIFIED INFORMATION

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CLASSIFIEDS

Literary
(Continued from page 59)

SEASONS. Quarterly newsletter for busy people who entertain at home. Menus, recipes, wines, style, talk. $10 annually—$3 single issue. DNR, P. O. Box 375, Old Westbury, N.Y. 11568.

OLD BOOKSCOUT locates out-of-print books. Write "Greenmantle," P. O. Box 1777NR, Culpepper, Va. 22701-6324.

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Miscellaneous

URGENT—CZECH FREE-MARKETEERS need help immediately. Czech Ministry dealing with problems of emerging free-market economy needs books donated on privatization. Send directly to: Pavel Bratinka, Ceske Ministerstvo Pro Spravv Warodni Ho Majetku, A Privatizaci, Senovazne Nam 32, 11000 Praha 1, Czechoslovakia.

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To be eligible for this special discount, all insertion orders must be pre-paid. Closing date is January 2. Any ads that are currently scheduled to run in 1991 will be credited to the following year.

Contact: Dorian Robbins, Classified Advertising, *National Review*, 150 East 35th Street, N.Y., N.Y. 10016, for more details.

PRE-READ *National Reviews*: Thanks from the Muris and all who may have the chance to enjoy and intellectually grow from the *NR*s sent to us by many. The response was outstanding; however, no more are needed as of now.

KUEHNELT-LEDDIHN
(Continued from page 27)

continental Europe. Something like the pseudo-liberalism popular in America has a few European adherents (especially in the north), but it has no real chance of becoming widespread. Given its unspiritual, sentimental vagueness and inner contradictions, it does not take root in our soil. But conservatism does not seem a popular alternative. Not a single party in any of the Catholic or Orthodox countries calls itself conservative.

In this connection I often think of a passage from Auberon Waugh's brilliant novel *Who Are the Violets Now?* A rich, enigmatic Londoner with a slight accent is abducted one day by the Israeli secret police and brought to trial as another Eichmann. Journalists waiting outside the courthouse in Tel Aviv debate the question of what tortures the defendant should be subjected to. They are interrupted by an idealist who tells them they are talking like barbarians; the defendant—even though he butchered hundreds of thousands of innocents—should not be burnt alive, drawn and quartered, or mutilated, but "re-educated." Everybody agrees until one man asks: "Re-educated, yes, but toward what?" Nobody has an answer.

If Marx is wrong and man is more than his belly, if Skinner is wrong and man does not act like a machine, if Freud is wrong and man is more than his sexual impulses, then what is man? This is not only a theological and philosophical question, but also a political question of some urgency, to which, at the moment, Europe has no answer. As the old regimes of East–Central Europe break up, we are witnessing the deep, perhaps mortal, crisis of a simplistic, materialistic faith, and nothing, so far, seems able to replace it. Liberal, multi-party democracy? What if the parties put all their energy into fighting each other instead of working for the common good? Conservatism? The slowly growing awareness that the remote past was better than what followed it is consoling, but it is not enough. □

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TRANS-O-GRAM / Kem Putney

1 F	2 I	■	3 C	4 M	5 O	6 B	7 L	8 D	9 P	■	10 J	11 N	12 H	13 T	14 R	■	15 F	16 C	17 G
18 J	■	19 D	20 S	21 A	22 B	23 K	24 O	■	25 M	26 P	27 H	28 E	29 L	30 F	31 G	■	32 H	33 N	34 C
■	35 A	36 M	■	37 Q	38 I	■	39 B	40 D	41 P	■	42 M	43 G	44 C	45 A	46 L	47 F	48 T	49 J	50 H
51 E	■	52 I	53 B	54 K	■	55 C	56 G	57 D	58 F	■	59 R	60 N	61 G	62 L	63 E	64 A	65 S	66 K	67 O
■	68 C	69 J	70 M	■	71 F	72 G	73 E	74 L	75 Q	76 N	■	77 M	78 G	■	79 B	80 F	81 C	82 I	83 E
84 A	■	85 D	86 H	87 F	88 I	89 R	90 K	91 O	92 C	93 A	■	94 J	95 F	96 G	97 N	98 C	■	99 T	100L
101F	■	102A	103O	104D	105S	106K	107M	108G	109E	110B	111R	■	112T	113O	114M	■	115S	116O	117J
118Q	■	119J	120G	121I	122M	123C	124H	■	125E	126K	127C	128I	129P	130J	131H	■	132R	133D	134C
135A	136Q	■	137T	138D	139C	■	140L	141M	142S	143A	144J	145P	146R	147B	■	148E	149M	150N	151I
152J	153T	■	154P	155F	156O	■	157B	158P	159H	160M	161D	■	162S	163H	164K	165L	166I	167N	168B

DEFINITIONS

A. One kind of cowboy — 45 143 35 102 64 135 21 93 84

B. At once — 22 147 79 157 6 110 39 53 168

C. Yule decor (2 words) — 127 16 34 123 98 55 81 44 3 68 / 134 92 139

D. A Lenin successor (var.) — 57 161 133 85 138 19 40 8 104

E. William Tell's favorite dish? (2 words) — 73 51 125 83 109 148 28 63

F. Necessity — 71 58 87 95 80 47 101 1 30 155 / 15

G. One kind of ball — 108 56 78 61 120 72 96 17 31 43

H. Capable — 86 27 32 131 163 124 50 12 159

I. Day of Atonement (2 words) — 38 166 121 128 52 151 82 88 2

J. Best plays of the game—on film — 94 144 10 49 152 117 130 69 18 119

K. Divine seers, once — 164 106 126 23 54 66 90

L. Steady as a rock — 62 165 74 100 140 7 46 29

M. Unsophisticated — 36 160 122 4 42 149 141 77 107 114 / 70 25

N. Actors try to convey it — 60 167 150 97 11 33 76

O. Remove a monarch from power — 156 5 91 116 67 103 113 24

P. Toddler's ailment — 41 154 9 129 145 158 26

Q. The big cheese — 37 75 136 118

R. European capital — 146 111 132 89 14 59

S. What a baby might do with a ring? — 115 162 105 65 20 142

T. Manor — 153 48 137 112 99 13

DIRECTIONS

The object of TRANS-O-GRAM is to fill in the puzzle diagram by guessing the words from their definitions, and transferring each letter of the guessed word to the correspondingly numbered square in the diagram. When the diagram is filled in it will spell out a quotation from some published work (reading normally from left to right, black boxes indicating the ends of words); also, when the words have all been filled in above, their initial letters will spell out the author and title of the quoted work. The acrostic feature, and the relative word-lengths in the diagram, will assist in the solution. Spelling and definitions on the authority of *Webster's New International Dictionary*, Second Edition. **See page 59 for solution to last Trans-O-Gram.**

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Malcolm Muggeridge, R I P

NEW YORK, NOVEMBER 19

Ten years ago Malcolm Muggeridge and I shared the job of commentator for two programs filmed in the Sistine Chapel. Two weeks beforehand he telephoned. "Do you know," he said, "I have met I suppose all the important men and women in my lifetime and on the whole I think them an awful bore. But I want to meet the present Pope. Could you arrange it?"

I laughed: one always—inevitably—laughed in his company, which is one reason why one so looked forward to it. . . . When Pope John Paul approached Muggeridge he looked over benevolently and said to him, "Ah. You are radio!" It is very difficult to reply coherently to such a statement, so Muggeridge simply smiled a response. The Pope turned to the next guest in line at the private audience and said to David Niven, "Ah, you were the great friend of my predecessor." David Niven mumbled something about having had great admiration for Pope Paul VI, whom he never knew, and probably hadn't given five minutes' thought to. The poor, dear Pope was confused about the composition of the group he was meeting. After our blessing, Malcolm could not get over his amusement; but, ten years later, visiting with him in his little country house, I saw neatly framed in a corner of his living room a photograph. Him and the Pope.

When he died a week ago the commentators listed his affiliation with Christianity rather as though it had been the next post, after Editor of *Punch*. They did not seem to know that he had become the foremost evangelist of Christianity in the English language. On a television program in 1980, at his suggestion the hour was called, "Why I Am Not a Catholic." It was off to a wonderful start when he recounted his disillusion with a Catholic chaplain at the University of Edinburgh. Muggeridge had just been installed as chancellor (in Britain, university chancellors are popularity-contest winners of a sort) and the administration came out for giving the students free contraceptives; Muggeridge objected; the Catholic chaplain denounced his objection as monstrous.

WFB: Excuse me, but why was it monstrous?

MM: It was monstrous, according to him, because it accused the students of wanting to be promiscuous. But in a letter I wrote in answer to it, I said I wondered what the Reverend Father thought they wanted the contraceptives for. Was it to save up for their wedding day?

That was Muggeridge *vital*, the mordant clairvoyance that taught him to see through Communism in the early Thirties and brought him as high a reputation as has been achieved by any journalist in this century. He was everywhere, doing everything, but his odyssey was not without purpose. He was moving toward Christianity.

"Why did this longing for faith assail me? Insofar as I can point to anything, it has to do with this profession which both you and I have followed of observing what's going on in the world and attempting to report and comment thereon, because that particular occupation gives one a very heightened sense of the sheer fantasy of human affairs—the sheer fantasy of power and of the structures that men construct out of power—and therefore gives one an intense, overwhelming longing to be in contact with reality. And so you look for reality . . . and ultimately you arrive at the conclusion that reality is a mystery."

Why did he relish the mystery?

"Because it leads you to God. . . . It's exactly like—Bill, it's exactly like falling in love. You see another human being and for some extraordinary reason you're in a state of joy and ecstasy over that person, but the driving force which enables you to express that and to bring it into your life is love. Without love, it's nothing; it passes. It's the same with seeking reality, and there the driving force we call faith. It's a very difficult thing to define, actually."

He never did define grace, which is not definable, but in due course he and his wife joined the Catholic Church and he pursued his writing and his lecturing, now as an explicit Christian, of the best kind, the kind whose second greatest pleasure in life is laughter. After his stroke three months ago his brother wrote to say that Malcolm still enjoyed hearing from his friends, but could on no account acknowledge his mail.

He yearned to die, and hoped only that his beloved Kitty would go first. She survives him, reinforcing his belief in what it is that teaches us most. "As an old man, Bill, looking back on one's life, it's one of the things that strikes you most forcibly—that the only thing that's taught one anything is *suffering*. Not success, not happiness, not anything like that. The only thing that *really* teaches one what life's about . . . is suffering, affliction." He suffered, even at the end; but throughout his lifetime, he diminished the suffering of others, at first simply by his wit and intelligence; finally, by his own serenity, which brought serene moments to those graced by his presence. □

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Searching Out The Issues

NEW YORK, NOVEMBER 9

The election results have been foraged by the experts seeking out their meaning. The data are as unyielding as the Delphic oracle, who made his reputation by giving ambiguous answers.

For instance, did we learn for certain how the vote is tending on the issue of abortion? Answer: Not really; in part because those candidates who were pro-choice and won might very well have won for other reasons, the same being true of other candidates who ran undeviatingly (Jesse Helms) as pro-lifers.

Did we learn what is the national mandate on our military initiative in the Middle East? The answer is no, but this does not mean that our presence there won't be a heavy political factor in the future. One editorialist said that about

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one thing there was no question, namely that the Presidency of George Bush will rely for its justification on how he performed in the Middle East.

One problem with raising this point at this time is that no one knows what the cost will be of achieving an affirmative result. If Mr. Bush is able, as in Panama, to bring about the end of the dictator and his policies with minimum loss of life, that is one thing. Another, if we find ourselves engaged in a land war with casualty figures quickly mounting to four and five digits. And, of course, politically much depends on whether the Democratic Party is as clearly aligned as it has been in backing President Bush. One sees developing a hard Democratic insistence that Mr. Bush consult with Congress before taking the military road. And what if he were to do so? Probably, at this point, the Democrats would seek to devolve responsibility upon—the United Nations. What would happen if a proposal to invoke Article 52 and proceed with a military strike against Saddam Hussein were to win the backing of the Security Council except for a veto by China? Or the Soviet Union? Or both? Would the United States now be bound, in foreign policy, to respect a veto by Peking, or Moscow? In any event, this was unexamined ground in the elections, which were not fought out over Operation Desert Shield.

Nor did the savings-and-loan crisis figure heavily. Both parties clearly recognized that there was enough in the record to assign blame universally. In no state was S&L adjudged to have had a decisive influence on election results.

On one proposition all commentators are reasonably agreed. It is that George Bush's leadership on the tax question was quite simply catastrophic. What it did was to leave the party with an incoherence on the question of the role of taxes that brought about a kind of philosophical anarchy.

Ron Brown, the chairman of the Democratic Party, was of course elated by the results, and Democratic Governor Richard Celeste of Ohio went so far as to say that Republican candidates needed to distance themselves from their leader in order to survive. The exultation has to do with the Democratic conviction that by stressing a Fairness Doctrine and assaulting The Rich, they have discovered the key to political success.

It is unlikely that this will prove to be the case. The reason for this politically is that when you start to finance our deficits by taxing the rich, before you know it, you have reached the middle class, because the rich have about enough money, assuming they gave 100 per cent of it to the government, to sustain the government for a couple of weeks. Inevitably what then happens is that you reach the incomes of men and women who are struggling to maintain their standard of living while sending their children to college. These, unlike the rich, are very numerous; and are unlikely to sit about, speechless, if the Democratic Party resumes its sometime role as the enemy of the middle class into which it is America's economic mandate to welcome everybody. □

A New College Exam

NEW YORK, NOVEMBER 7

The answer to the question, What major changes did the College Board come up with in devising its new College Assessment Test, replacing the old SAT (Scholastic Aptitude Test)? is: Not much. This answer disappoints lobbies that want to see a test devised that eliminates all differences in performance between whites and non-whites; lobbies that want to see women do better than men; and lobbies that hoped the new test would give colleges a better idea of what to expect from the freshman class.

Criticisms unrelated to ethnic and sexual egalitarianism have been at two levels. The first is that unless you ask a student to write an analytical essay, you are not going to have a very good idea of how well trained his intellectual apparatus is. Such essays were standard a generation ago but were dropped. The reasons given were that multiple-choice questions are much easier to correct, and that many high schools do not stress essay writing, putting the graduates of such high schools at a disadvantage.

You can say that again! At Berkeley twenty years ago, 30 to 50 per cent of the freshman class were required to take courses in remedial reading. That they were in Berkeley to begin with meant that they were bright people. That they had trouble with English meant that they were poorly trained. The College Board promised to have another look at essays a few years down the line, and now makes way for those students who elect to be given an essay to write. An estimated one hundred thousand students will exercise that option.

What is still missing from the CAT is: information. This is the complaint of Mrs. Lynne Cheney, the bright and sprightly chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities. Her point is that it is possible to score well on verbal aptitude by studying a reasonably finite accumulation of words and knowing which of the multiple-choice answers to select: "Mark down the word that most nearly defines DECIMATE: 1) blacken, 2) brighten, 3) adorn, 4) decrease greatly in number, 5) deceive." In respect of math, genuine strides have been made. Beginning in 1994, instead of completing, "Mark down the answer to the question, 120 per cent of 50 equals—1) 45, 2) 50, 3) 55, 4) 60, 5) 65," the student will be asked: "What is 120 per cent of 50?" He will be permitted to use a calculator, but he will be required to exercise his mind in order to know what the calculator needs to do.

Now Mrs. Cheney says that this is all very well, but not enough. Where does the College Board find out if the student knows whether Gettysburg was a battle fought 1) in the War of the Roses, 2) in the Revolutionary War, 3) in the Civil War, 4) in World War II, 5) in the French and Indian War of the 1750s? Her point is that though we honor the need to acquire the tools of learning, we need also to acquire—learning. A heavy percentage of graduating high-school seniors cannot place the Civil War within fifty years of when it happened. And Senator Bill Bradley's explorations reveal that a high percentage of matriculating students in Texas colleges do not know the name of the country south of the border.

Mrs. Cheney's point is that schools have to begin to transmit barrels of knowledge. Mere verbal or mathematical or even analytical proficiency will not prepare an American for effective citizenship. A poll published a few years ago revealed that the majority of the American people believed the highest tax rate in the United States was 20 per cent. This at a time when it was 70 per cent. Those thus misinformed are not useful guides to congressional action, though manifestly they were critical during this past debate.

The College Board exams are a running political target. Willie Brown, the despotic boss of the California legislature, issued an ultimatum: If essay questions were required of foreign-born Californians, he would make the California university system drop the College Board tests. The pressure was clearly registered at Princeton, where the Board operates. But the best lobbying point should be the future education of the citizenry. Talk about deficient infrastructure should not be confined to talk about bridges and railroads. □

(Universal Press Syndicate)

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OFF THE RECORD

Big Bad John. One of the surprising casualties of Election Tuesday was the defeat of Representative Chuck Douglas (R., N.H.), in one of the most Republican districts in the nation. Well, a surprise to some. Inside the Beltway, fingers are being pointed at Chief of Staff John Sununu, whose wife, Nancy, once said she was thinking of running against Mr. Douglas.

The two men have feuded for a long time, dating back to some rulings Mr. Douglas made while a New Hampshire Supreme Court justice that didn't sit well with then-Governor Sununu. Complaints in GOP circles are that the governor has been conducting something of a whispering campaign against Mr. Douglas, revolving around his three divorces and suchlike. Indeed, Mr. Douglas's Democratic opponent, Dick Swett, dropped a direct-mail piece four or five days before the election featuring a prominent quotation from Mrs. Sununu saying: "I have known Chuck Douglas for over 15 years and I've never appreciated his values and his morals and that hasn't changed." Isn't this taking bipartisanship a tad too far?

With Friends like This. In more bad news about John Sununu, one of Cato's sources reports on a meeting in the Watergate apartment of Holly Coors which brought together Mr. Sununu and some top-ranking members of the Heritage Foundation. Mr. Sununu spent most of the evening moaning about his number-one problem today: not liberal Democrats but "conservative Republicans."

This complaint is echoed by others in the Administration. Conservatives within the White House say that the mood has turned ugly, that the Bushies increasingly think of conservatives as "the enemy" or "the other side." And you thought there was a big tent?

Thanks for the Use of the Hall. In the wake of the Hollywood Left's failure to dislodge Senator Jesse Helms in North Carolina, the director of the Conservative Victory Committee, L. Brent Bozell III, sent a letter to some of the more prominent Beautiful People inviting their assistance next time around. "The dishonest assaults on Helms by the homosexual lobby, the pornography lobby, the pro-abortion lobby, the big-government tax-and-spend lobby, the entertainment community, and the media—and the millions of dollars you all poured into the state—guaranteed one thing: victory for Senator Helms. . . . Nothing would please me more than to see you folks do it again in 1992."

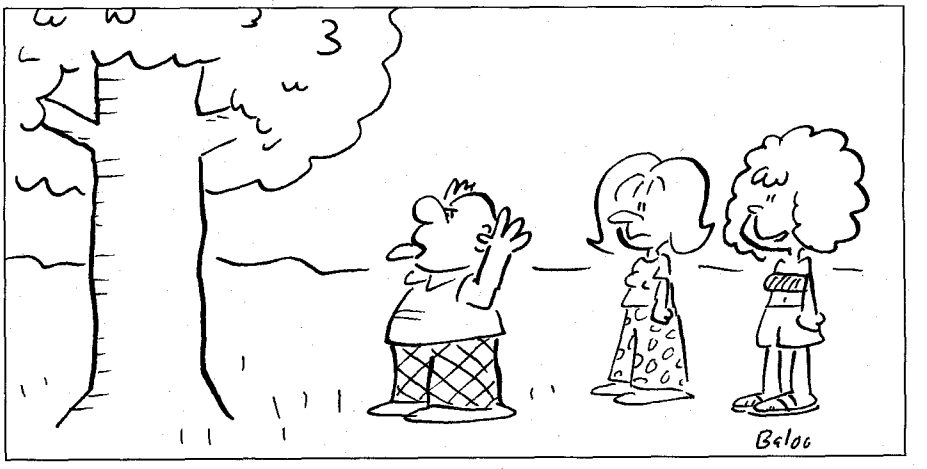
The letter went out to more than a dozen silver-screen Lefties, including Robin Williams, Paul Newman, Justine Bateman, Meredith Baxter-Birney, Norman Lear, and Joanne Woodward. Now if we can only get George Bush to campaign against conservatives in their districts, too, we might get that majority.

If Men Were Angels. You thought Senator Joe Biden (D., Del.) was the only one who had problems with citations? During his campaign against Republican Rudy Boschwitz (R., Minn.) Democratic challenger Paul Wellstone liked to portray himself as the guardian of virtue, even likening himself to Mother Teresa. But Senator-elect Wellstone outdid himself in his victory speech. "As we celebrate tonight," said Mother Wellstone, "I want us to remember the words of the late Hubert H. Humphrey: 'Where there is hatred, let me sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; and where there is darkness, light.'" Apologies to St. Francis.

Right Reason. In this space last issue, Cato put his foot in his mouth by saying that the frontrunner for the chairmanship of the RNC was unsuccessful Senate candidate Lynn Martin; the spot actually went to William Bennett. Cato is delighted, of course, that the RNC has a man who will spend his time attacking Democrats, but there are some pitfalls awaiting the former drug czar.

One sympathetic, high-ranking White House staffer notes that the RNC's top spot requires someone willing to schmooze and raise money, and to act as apologist for the President —none of which suits Mr. Bennett's no-nonsense approach to politics. That is why he demanded (and received) assurances that he would be included on top decisions. The reason for the appointment? In addition to silencing a potential challenger, the nomination of Mr. Bennett to the RNC is seen as a move by John Sununu to fend off pollster Bob Teeter, who is rumored to be in line for a top White House position and has had his eye on the RNC. So there you have it: more mixed signals from the top.

Peggy, They Need You. Spotted at the White House speechwriting department: a sign saying, "The Beatings Will Continue until Morale Improves." That says it all, doesn't it? —CATO



"Fred's an anti-environmentalist."

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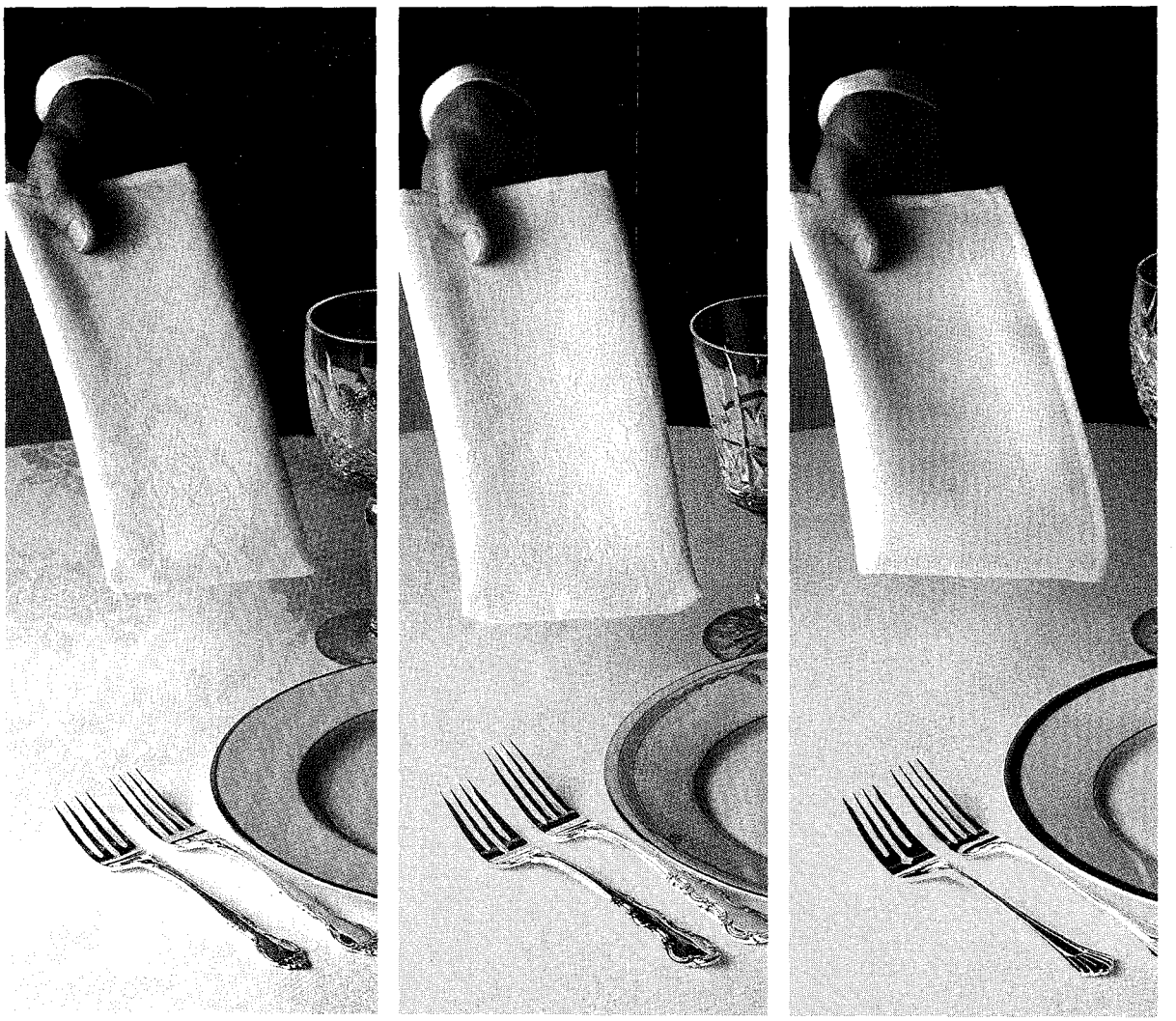

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